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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
A SURVEY OF PROFESSIONAL ENTERTAINMENT AND THEATRE IN
EDMONTON, ALBERTA BEFORE 1914

by



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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance,
a thesis entitled A Survey of Professional Entertainment and
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Abstract

Similar to the history of the professional theatre anywhere in Canada, that of Edmonton consists primarily of a record of mostly foreign touring companies presenting, at first, European, then mainly American-written plays and musical comedies. Such companies began to appear in the city in the early 1890's. The history of entertainment in Edmonton before this date tells a story of vigorous amusements carried out by the hardy fur-traders and trappers situated in and around Fort Edmonton in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Gradually, as settlement increased, amusements became more sophisticated and a rapid change from physical participatory recreations to the more refined presentational forms of the 1870's and 1880's became evident.

The touring troupes of the 1890's held forth at Robertson's Hall, Edmonton's first playhouse. These barnstormers were a varied lot presenting everything from variety concerts and melodrams, to light opera and Shakespeare.

During the first decade of the twentieth century the stage in Thistle Rink and then that of the Edmonton Opera House became the favorite homes of the touring troupes until the Empire Theatre eliminated vaudeville from its boards and took over in the second decade of the twentieth century.

Resident stock companies came into vogue at about the same time and in two or three houses in the city provided theatre-goers with a varied fare of musical comedy from Broadway, melodrama and the odd new form of social play. The early twentieth century saw the extension in a continual fare of "warmed-over" New York productions, good and bad alike. These were also the years when numerous famous names of the

world stage, such as Johnstone Forbes-Robertson, Robert Mantell, Maude Adams and Sarah Bernhardt visited the west and thrilled Edmonton audiences with their great talents.

Movies and vaudeville became a way of life in the new century. The drama struggled bravely first against vaudeville then against the silent motion picture, and just before the Great War against the colorful talkies. Perhaps the battle might have been won, but the Depression dealt the final blow and the era of the great professional road companies came to an end.

This thesis attempts to create an accurate and detailed account of the various forms of entertainment in Edmonton from the beginnings of civilization until the first World War. There is a concentration on the professional theatre -which, indeed, was the most popular form of amusement before the Great War. No attempt is made at sociological comment, at analyzing audience psychology or at expressing historical opinions. Only after the story has been told in its entirety can any such conclusions be drawn.

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Part I
The Early Years

Chapter I

The Earliest Days -Fort Edmonton

The story of Edmonton in this early era of its history is one of constant rivalry between the powerful fur trading organizations, the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-West Company; of continuous re-locations with the warlike and none too firendly Indians. The intense rivalry between the rough explorer-fur-traders resulted at times in the bitterest feeling and even bloodshed.¹ There was tribal warfare too among the Indians which was traditional but precipitated as a result of fur-trade squabbles. The white inhabitants of Fort Edmonton took what precautions they could to forestall attacks and met only with varying degrees of success.²

During the 1780's trading was carried on at the gate of the fort due to fear of hostile Indians.³ Gradually, by 1800 natives were allowed inside the fort to trade and loaded blunderbusses were kept in readiness for emergencies in case the red customers proved troublesome.⁴ These were the years when rum was used in trade, and when wild scenes occurred among the intoxicated savages which left bullet marks and knife hackings on the walls of the trading room.⁵

The temper of life in the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth was hardly one conducive to any great amount of entertainment. The character required of the whites and half-breeds to live this life was not a character imbued with the social graces.

1. Beatrice A. Ockley, "A History of Early Edmonton" [unpublished thesis, University of Alberta, 1932], p. 17.
2. The Edmonton Bulletin, September 17, 1921.
3. Ockley, Early Edmonton, p. 23.
4. Ibid.
5. Sir William Schooling, A History of the Hudson's Bay Company [London: Hudson's Bay Company, 1920], n. p.

"The small numbers in such close proximity and the complete isolation were not conducive to much variety of amusement to wile away the leisure hours. Tastes were simple, however, and the most was made of the resources at hand."⁶ What amusement existed was in keeping with the vigorous physical hardiness of the inhabitants necessary for survival.

Dog-racing was a favorite winter pastime in these early days.⁷ "Great was the rivalry among the owners of dog-teams as to their appearance, staying qualities and speed. The French half-breeds and traders around the post spent much time and a goodly portion of their resources on the furbelows and accoutrements for their dogs and carioles."⁸ According to Alexander Ross there was

An abominable custom...very prevalent among the traders in Edmonton...in keeping so many starving dogs about the establishment in summer for their imaginary services in winter...The emulation among men for dogs was so great that all their...earnings were spent on them; and the tawdry paraphernalia required to ornament a first-rate train was as expensive as it was foolish: the wife [often Indian] might go without her blanket; but the husband must have his dogs and the dogs their scarlet ribbons and their bells...⁹

Fort Edmonton appeared less inclined toward amusement even than

6. Ockley, Early Edmonton, p. 257.

7. Dogs, of course, were used in winter for travelling.

8. Ockley, Early Edmonton, p. 257.

9. Alexander Ross, Fur Hunters in the Far West [London: Smith, Elder and Company, 1855], V. II, p. 212.

other posts at this time:

At almost every other post men and women are to be seen congregating together during the sports and amusements of the men. But it is not so here. I did not see a woman, old or young, married or single going about the place idle: all seemed to keep at home and be employed about their own affairs.¹⁰

Horse-racing was a form of recreation engaged in primarily in the summer in the early days of the fort. Alexander Ross recorded that there was a level race ground two miles or more in length adjoining the cultivated fields near Fort Edmonton.¹¹ Duncan M'Gillivray wrote in his Journal that on one occasion he and

...a band of forty cavaliers issued out of the Fort and after having raced the horses till they were quite exhausted... changed them for fresh ones...and fatigued them in the same manner. Bets ran high: fathoms of strouds and scarfs and even horse against horse were often proposed and accepted by the men.¹²

Hunting was a popular pastime in both winter and summer.¹³

10. Ross, Fur Hunters, p. 210.

11. Ibid.

12. Professor A. S. Morton, ed. The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray of the North West Company at Fort George on the Saskatchewan [Toronto: n. p., 1929], p. 78.

13. Ibid.

Paul Kane¹⁴ wrote of a buffalo hunt soon after he reached the post:

We mounted our chosen horses and nine miles later... we came to a place where the snow was trodden down in every direction and on ascending the bank, we found ourselves in the close vicinity of an enormous herd of buffaloes, probably numbering nearly ten thousand....The snow was so deep that the buffaloes were either unable or unwilling to run far and at last came to a dead stand. We...advanced towards them on foot to within forty or fifty yards when we commenced firing which we continued to do until we were tired of a sport so little exciting; for strange to say, they never tried either to escape or to attack us.

Seeing a very large bull in the herd, I thought I would kill him for the purpose of getting the skin of his enormous head and preserving it. He fell: but as he was surrounded by three others that I could not frighten away, I was obliged to shoot them all before I could venture near him....The sport proving rather tedious...we determined to return home.¹⁶

By the 1840's Edmonton had already gained great importance as a

14. Paul Kane was a Canadian painter who made the round trip from Canada to Fort Vancouver in 1846-47 for the purpose of making a series of pictures "illustrative of the North American Indians, their manners and customs and of the scenery of an almost unknown country."¹⁵

15. Paul Kane, Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America [London: Longman, Brown, Greene and Roberts, 1859], p. viii.

16. Ibid., p. 368.

trading post and stop-over for pioneers proceeding farther west. Gradually the country became less hostile and travellers increased. Nevertheless, the fur-trading post was still quite cut off from much intercourse with the east. So those persons who ventured this far, particularly those of note, were the occasion for celebration. Dancing was the pastime offered. When a particularly distinguished person arrived it was customary to give a ball.¹⁷ In 1841, for example, Governor Simpson came to Fort Edmonton and a ball given in the Governor's honor, according to Alexander Ross, was conducted with much good taste and decorum.¹⁸

The first Christmas celebration recorded in any detail was that of 1847. Paul Kane described a dining-hall, fifty by twenty-five feet, painted in a style of the most startling, barbaric gaudiness designed to astonish the natives.¹⁹ In the evening a dance was held. The guests included, "Indians, whose chief ornament consisted in the paint on their faces, voyageurs with bright sashes and neatly ornamented mocassins, [and] half-breeds glittering in every ornament they could lay their hands on."²⁰ Having chosen a squaw to dance with, to "...some highland reel tune which the fiddler played with great vigour..." and, "...having led her into the centre of the room," wrote Mr. Kane, "I danced around her with all the agility I was capable of exhibiting... whilst my partner with grave face kept jumping up and down, both feet off the ground at once, as only an Indian can dance."²¹

17. Ockley, Early Edmonton, p. 260.

18. Ross, Fur Hunters, p. 209.

19. Kane, Wanderings of an Artist, p. 374.

20. Ibid., p. 377.

21. Ibid., p. 378.

By the 1860's, although conditions were more settled, society still demonstrated a frontier character: a member of a group of travellers in 1862 wrote:

We had a ball in a large room of the Fort on the night of our arrival: the ladies were the half-breed wives of men of the Fort and the dances were all reels, etc., danced with great spirit. When you wanted a partner you never spoke [of course that would have been of no use] but you touched any of the women and walked off to your place and presently the partner chosen would walk up to your side; after the dance the gentleman walked to his seat and the lady to hers.²²

Needless to say, "...the fair sex of the establishment were not accustomed to much gallantry from the male members."²³

Winters were hard and often outdoor entertainment proved impossible. The recreation most common was quite in keeping with everyone's concept of life in the wilderness:

...sitting around the blazing log fire, pipes puffing vigorously and...weather-beaten visaged men, isolated for the most of the year from social intercourse...exchanging tales of their various experiences. There were doubtless many stories of hair-raising excitement, of hardships endured, also wit and sallies at the expense of their brothers....²⁴

22. M. S. Wade, "Memoir Number IX", in The Overlanders of '62, ed. by John Hosie [Victoria: Banfield, 1931], n. p.

23. Ockley, Early Edmonton, p. 261.

24. Ibid., pp. 84-85

Chapter II

Settlement and the End of Isolation

On July 15, 1870, the Hudson's Bay Co. ceded that portion of the North-West known as Rupert's Land to the newly federated government of Canada. The newly acquired area, which included Edmonton, subsequently became known as the North-West Territories. In 1874 the first detachment of the North-West Mounted Police arrived and marked the change from the old order to the new.¹ Previous to this the number of settlers was small, but by the 1870's the trading post began to take on the semblance of a settlement. "The variety of amusements grew greater with the increasing number and versatility of the settlers."² Dog-racing had become a thing of the past. The popularity of horse-racing, however, did not wane. During the summer on a race-track somewhat north of the present Hudson's Bay Store, horse-racing was still carried on with great zest.³

By 1880, settlement increased rapidly. Before the coming of the police,

There was no law and no means of enforcing it. The enmity among various Indian tribes, frequently debauched by whiskey traders, made the settler live at considerable risk....With the enforcement of law and order and the control of the rum traffic, settlers, feeling that their lives and labours would be unmolested began to trickle in.⁴

By 1882 every claim on the north side of the river for five miles above the town and eight miles below had been taken and very nearly the same

1. Ockley, Early Edmonton, p. 116.

2. Ibid., p. 262.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 124.

on the south side.⁵

On January 18, 1880, the telegraph finally reached the settlement of Edmonton and the era of isolationism was finally at an end. Beatrice Ockley pointed out though that "From the beginning great difficulty was experienced in keeping the line in a state which would give satisfactory service over it at all."⁶

The telegraph, as unreliable as it was, had as one of its immediate consequences, the establishment of Edmonton's first newspaper, The Edmonton Bulletin, which published its first issue on October 6, 1880. Previously, in 1876, a mail service was established, which grew more reliable, frequent and sophisticated in the next few years. The railroad reached Calgary in 1883. In the summer of the same year two stage lines were started between Calgary and Edmonton.

Until 1880, entertainment of any kind in Edmonton, let alone theatrical entertainment was scarce. Pioneer life, cold weather, and lack of population continued to plague the settlement for a number of years to come. The next ten years did not by any means demonstrate a colossal advance in this regard, for the residents were still too busy taming the Territory to have the time or need for any complex social ritual. But things began to happen and as the decade progressed momentum increased.

Various trends in entertainment characterize the decade beginning in 1880. The first was a gradual sophistication in the kinds of social activities in which the townsmen and the surrounding farmers engaged. The most popular group pastime in the early eighties was

5. Bulletin, April 8, 1882.

6. Ockley, Early Edmonton, p. 140.

dancing. Many of the dances were held either in private homes or barns, such as the one, for example, on February 25, 1882, at George Gagnon's,⁷ followed a short time later by one at Colin Fraser's.⁸ Reference to dances of this type became rare and almost ceased completely after 1883. The dances now were more usually termed balls and were held for the most part within the limits of Edmonton. Their social importance increased and whole paragraphs, rather than just one or two lines were devoted to them in the Bulletin. However, the ball was perhaps not quite as high-hatted an affair as Edmontonians wanted to believe. At one affair, in 1883, for example, dancing was kept up with spirit until four o'clock in the morning. In addition to the usual violin music Mr. Murray gave a few highly appreciated tunes on the bagpipes.⁹ Later the same year another ball was kept up until six a.m. and the guests finally dispersed after breakfast was served.¹⁰

Despite their lack of pretentiousness the balls were elaborate affairs. The Bulletin described an Orangeman's ball which had a supper table that was one of the best ever laid in Edmonton on any similiar occasion. One of the decorations on the table, for example, was a pile of glass goblets surmounted by a huge orange lily curiously manufactured out of different colored table napkins.¹¹ The Bulletin wrote of a bachelor's ball the following year at which

...three tables with a total seating capacity of 100 were

7. Bulletin, February 25, 1882.

8. Bulletin, February 25, 1882.

9. Bulletin, December 8, 1883.

10. Bulletin, December 27, 1883.

11. Bulletin, December 8, 1883.

loaded down with the most elaborate ornamentation in the way of cakes, pies, jellies, meats, and all the good things that go to make up an enjoyable meal on such an occasion in this hungry country, not forgetting the large and beautifully iced fruit cakes....¹²

Excursion picnics were also popular in the early part of the decade and often took the place of the dances and balls in the summer. They too were elaborate, all-day affairs. In 1885, one picnic began in the morning replete with several tents, a great deal of food, games, and fireworks in the evening.¹³ References to the summer picnic became much less frequent and almost ceased after the middle of the decade, as they probably lost much of their importance with the increasing sophistication of social affairs.

An important manifestation of this increase in sophistication was evident in the decrease in utilitarian ends of the entertainments as the decade advanced. For example, the Orangeman's ball previously referred to was held to raise funds for the lodge.¹⁴ Entertainments were held to raise money for such things as an organ fund,¹⁵ for the benefit of the public school¹⁶ and for the Ladies Society of All-Saints Church.¹⁷

In the latter part of the decade the functional aspect of the

12. Bulletin, January 26, 1884.

13. Bulletin, July 3, 1885.

14. Bulletin, December 8, 1883.

15. Bulletin, February 2, 1884.

16. Bulletin, February 2, 1884.

17. Bulletin, July 3, 1885.

social activities decreased, as entertainments were held simply for fun.¹⁸ In 1888 a leap year ball was put on for the first time in Edmonton. According to the Bulletin, the ballroom was tastefully decorated, and "Supper provided by the ladies who got up the ball...was an exhibition of cookery as a fine art."¹⁹ Robbie Burns day was another special occasion similarly honored.²⁰ The ultimate goal of the increasing entertainments such as these was pure fun. Materialistic ends were more often non-existent.

In the latter part of the decade, the concert gradually began to move into the limelight and became the dominant form of entertainment in the early nineties. Though entirely amateur, the concert was the first form of presentational entertainment to appear that was significant enough to be regarded as a major step toward actual theatrical presentations still to come.

Brief reference was made to the occasional concert in Edmonton in 1884²¹ but the first presentational entertainment of any length and substance was not described until 1887. The review of this concert is quoted in its entirety as it was characteristic of those in the ensuing years:

A literary and musical entertainment was given last evening in the public school house by Mr. Simcoe Lee, assisted by a

18. Social functions with specifically utilitarian ends did not cease completely, as indeed they continue to this day.

19. Bulletin, March 3, 1888.

20. Bulletin, January 28, 1888.

21. For example, the Bulletin of June 28, 1884 wrote: "Selections from Shakespeare, with music by the new tin pan orchestra, were given to an appreciative audience on Main Street last Thursday night by members of the Pink Eye Club."

number of local amateurs. The building was crowded. A poem appropriate to the occasion of the Queen's jubilee²² epitomizing the principal events of her reign, composed and recited by Mr. Lee, received marked and deserved applause. The programme was as follows: "Mermaid Song" [from Oberon], organ, J. R. Michael; song, "Ehreen on the Rhine," Harry Anthony; recital, "Ostler Joe," Simcoe Lee; song, "Jack's Yarn," C. Bechner; reading from "Tom O'Shanter," Charles L. Shaw; Buffo Song from "The Mikado," W. E. Cameron; encore; poem, "The Raven," Simcoe Lee; song, "The Bay Biscay," J. K. Michael; recital "The Golden Reign," given in public for the first time by the author, Simcoe Lee; song, "It's for Money," Harry Anthony; encore; recital, "The Injun," [An H. B. experience] Simcoe Lee; descriptive, "How Ruby Played," W. B. Cameron.²³

This concert review was the first one to mention the name of Simcoe Lee. The date of his arrival in Edmonton or his profession remain mysteries. He was instrumental in organizing and participated in almost every concert that followed until his departure in May, 1888.²⁴ He would appear to be Edmonton's first resident professional entertainer by the tone of his address on the occasion of his farewell concert: "Mr. Lee made a short farewell address expressing his thanks to those who had assisted him at his various entertainments...and his good

22. The fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne was one of several important events to affect Edmonton during this decade which included also the Riel Rebellion in 1885.

23. Bulletin, April 23, 1887.

24. Bulletin, May 5, 1888.

feeling towards the people in Edmonton generally. He will give an entertainment at Ft. Saskatchewan...and will shortly after leave for the east."²⁵ His celebrity status was suggested further by the report of his broken leg from which he was "progressing favourably, though necessarily slowly, towards recovery,"²⁶ in 1887. News reports of this nature were not generally printed regarding citizens of ordinary status.

Concerts such as the one previously quoted though numerous, appeared to be as sophisticated as entertainments became during this decade, with two exceptions. The July 23rd, 1887 issue of the Bulletin reported that the dramatic club of the Jean Baptiste society, assisted by several well-known Edmonton amateurs would repeat in Edmonton a programme previously given at St. Albert.²⁷ Also, a dramatic society was organized in Edmonton in 1886 with Robert Strachan as president and Simcoe Lee as stage director.²⁸

A very marked trend in the eighties was the increase in the amount of leisure time and participation in recreational activities by Edmontonians: after 1885 concerts became very frequent; a year later the Agricultural Exhibition was, "...the most successful ever held in Edmonton. The number of entries, over 500, was greater than ever before, the attendance larger, the interest manifested keener, and the exhibits better."²⁹ The Edmonton Glee Club was organized

25. Bulletin, May 5, 1888.

26. Bulletin, December 3, 1887.

27. Bulletin, July 23, 1887.

28. Jolayne Sillito, "A Study of the Community and University Theatres in Edmonton from 1882 to 1964" [unpublished M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966], p. 5.

29. Bulletin, August 21, 1886.

in 1887³⁰ and gave a number of concerts in the following years.

Also, societies and organizations sprang up like mushrooms: an agricultural society was organized in 1884,³¹ and a library society³² and literary society in 1885.³³ The latter was one of the most active clubs in the following years.

Sports played an early role in Edmonton's history. As early as 1882 a game of cricket was reported to have taken place near the Fort,³⁴ and lacrosse matches were held too³⁵ with an actual lacrosse field in existence as early as 1883.³⁶ However, like all other forms of recreation, sports activities took an upward surge in the latter part of the decade. In 1887 a skating rink was opened³⁷ and later was formed a rifle association,³⁸ a curling club³⁹ and a baseball club.⁴⁰ Sleighing became a popular winter sport also. In issue after issue of the Bulletin lists of curling rinks and schedules took up whole pages.

Another manifestation of the trend toward a greater interest in

30. Bulletin, December 11, 1887.

31. Bulletin, January 14, 1884.

32. Bulletin, January 24, 1885.

33. Bulletin, February 21, 1885.

34. Bulletin, May 13, 1882.

35. Bulletin, April 14, 1883.

36. Bulletin, June 23, 1883.

37. Bulletin, December 24, 1887.

38. Bulletin, March 9, 1889.

39. Bulletin, April 13, 1889.

40. Bulletin, April 13, 1889.

social affairs in the late eighties was the increase in interest and participation in elections which became most marked in 1887 and 1888.

A letter to the editor of the Bulletin in 1888 demonstrated one citizen's concern for lack of a suitable place in which to engage in these now numerous social activities:

Now that the 'Mammeth' is to be converted into a store, what are our farmers and citizens to do during the coming long winter for a hall for intellectual treats, such as a lecture,...concerts by the Glee Society, open nights by the

Apollo Club celebrations of national nights, anniversaries, etc?⁴¹ This was not the first such plea. It was in 1881, in fact, that the need for a town hall was first mentioned. But the reasons for such a building were very different. Its entertainment value, only seven years previously was not of as great an importance:

There are...many measures that can be taken for the welfare and advancement of the country if, it were possible for the people of the different sections to meet and exchange opinions freely and the fact of their meeting in common, would do much to destroy that sectional feeling which exists to a slight extent at present and would help to induce all parties to make common cause for the common good.⁴²

The schoolhouse was the most common meeting place in Edmonton from 1881 until Robertson's Hall was built in 1892. It was in the schoolhouse, for example, that the occasional public lecture was held;⁴³ that the

41. Bulletin, September 8, 1888.

42. Bulletin, January 31, 1881.

43. The December 30, 1882 issue of the Bulletin reported a lecture on "National Songs" by Rev. Baird.

societies [library, literary, etc] held their gatherings; where special meetings were held; and where Simcoe Lee's concerts were performed. Numerous affairs were held in churches and church halls too.

In 1881 a Masonic Ball was reported to have taken place at McDougall's Hall.⁴⁴ The hall was mentioned again in 1882 in relation to a grievances meeting regarding timber laws.⁴⁵ In 1882 a Masonic Hall was used for meetings and gatherings,⁴⁶ which may be the same building. In 1883 the Bulletin referred to an exhibition hall.⁴⁷ However, this building was probably connected with the agricultural exhibition and used for stock showings.

In 1887 the Bulletin reported that there was some talk of erecting a public hall in Edmonton, and that MacDonald and Co., had offered a lot⁴⁸ for the purpose. Apparently the project was carried through for in 1881 a leap year ball was given in A. MacDonald and Company's large building.⁴⁹

In 1881 a ball was held at the Edmonton Hotel, which claimed to be "The Pioneer House of Entertainment west of Portage La Prairie,"⁵⁰ and another at the Palace Hotel in 1887.⁵¹ It is most likely that other affairs whose locations were not stated were held in the hotels also.

44. Bulletin, December 31, 1881.

45. Bulletin, January 7, 1882.

46. Bulletin, July 15, 1882.

47. Bulletin, October 13, 1883.

48. Bulletin, September 24, 1887.

49. Bulletin, March 3, 1888.

50. Bulletin, October 7, 1881.

51. Bulletin, December 24, 1887.

Indian dancing was another form of entertainment that was popular and frequent. From the point of view of the Natives these dances were not, of course, held for this purpose. Their religious significance was still paramount. For example, in 1887, a thirst dance was held to give thanks to the gods for saving the life of a chief's daughter. About fifty tents of Indians took part. They danced as long as the music played and neither ate nor drank for forty-eight hours.⁵² The white men in Edmonton did not take the dancing seriously and referred to every dance, no matter the season or purpose, as a thirst dance. The dance as a religious ritual was also something they refused to take seriously. Instances of the whites' cynical attitude were frequent. For example, Mr. Oliver of the Bulletin reported:

The Indians who monopolized the lacrosse ground and race track during their thirst dance left all their tent poles standing. These will be turned into account by the lacrosse boys who will use them to make a railing...around the grounds. As the medicine tent contains a very large number of poles it will be quite a bonanza, and the sacred pole in the centre when cut up will make very good fence posts. The boys had better look out that the timber bird or spirit doesn't get after them.⁵³

And, "Indians do not seem to have recovered from the effects of their thirst dance. Thirty or forty tents are camped around

52. Bulletin, July 30, 1887.

53. Bulletin, June 23, 1883.

the town yet."⁵⁴

On the whole, entertainment was upright and wholesome. This was the Age of Victoria, and even in the relatively unsophisticated Northwest collars were heavily starched. In 1883, for example, the Bulletin observed that there was more gambling in the town than the letter of the law called for.⁵⁵ A reprint in the Bulletin on February 7, 1891, from the Calgary Herald demonstrated further the temper of the times:

...the painted Jezebels who have been elbowing and hustling honest women in the shops while practising all kinds of indecencies in open day...have been taught a valuable lesson by Colonel Herchmer....Under the eyes of our own authorities the harlots and the gamblers and the crooks have had full swing. It is time to call a halt in this direction and to insist upon these as well as upon other offenders against the law being taken in hand. They are quite too daring and it is time the police warned them out of town.⁵⁶

54. Bulletin, July 7, 1883.

55. Bulletin, January 20, 1883.

56. Bulletin, February 7, 1891.

Part II

The Robertson Hall Years

Chapter I

New Trends in Entertainment

"This morning the railway engines could be heard for the first time in Edmonton...."¹ Primarily as a result of the arrival of the railway, Edmonton experienced a boom in the early 1890's that greatly increased its population. By the fall of 1891 a growth in the flow of immigrants to the area as well as an increase in business establishments was already evident. "The completion of the C. N. E. Railway to Edmonton...practically added a new province to the Dominion of Canada."² Edmonton grew particularly extensively in the year 1892, truly a boom year, as reflected, for example, in the expansion of the Bulletin, which on May 2nd of that year became a bi-weekly. The sudden growth brought with it a change in character too. The small-town atmosphere began to slip away amid the rapid commercialization.

The quick growth in the nineties meant, of course, a proliferation of recreational activities. Some of the forms of entertainment known in former years continued, but as the decade progressed, the character of this entertainment changed in its reflection of this economic boom, becoming more commercial -another step toward the heyday of the professional road companies in the early years of the next century.

Both the local amateur concert and the summer picnic continued as popular diversions. These forms of entertainment became much less prevalent in the summer months as a result of the arrival of the early road companies which, in the first few years of the decade did not yet dare venture into the wilderness in winter.

1. Bulletin, July 25, 1891.

2. Bulletin, March 6, 1892.

The growth in population was perhaps most evident in the greatly increased athletic activity in the early years of the decade. Already by the fall of 1891 whole half-page columns in the Bulletin were devoted to cricket, baseball, football, etc. reports. In 1892, in addition to the rifle club, curling, cricket and baseball clubs,[which were the most popular], there was organized a tennis club,³ a lacrosse club,⁴ a gymnastics, boxing and fencing club⁵ and a bicycle club in June of 1893.⁶

Cricket was the predominant sport in the summer, followed by baseball. In the winter, curling news filled the newspaper pages. In 1892, for the first time competition went outside the city when two rinks of Calgary curlers arrived by train, "...to play a friendly game with Edmontonians."⁷ A return match was also to take place. In fact, there was even, "...some talk of the Edmonton Curling Club competing in the bonspiel in Winnipeg."⁸

Another event which continued into this decade and on into the twentieth century, and linked with athletics was the annual summer sports day. The Bulletin of 1893 advertised one with cricket, football, lawn tennis [Calgary vs Edmonton], baseball, horse races, bicycle races, a gun club tournament and a contest in which a greasy pig was to become the property of the person who caught and took it off the fields.⁹

3. Bulletin, April 23, 1892.

4. Bulletin, April 23, 1892.

5. Bulletin, May 19, 1892.

6. Bulletin, June 15, 1893.

7. Bulletin, February 6, 1892.

8. Bulletin, January 16, 1892.

9. Bulletin, May 15, 1893.

The lecture, which began to gain popularity at the end of the last decade, also gained great favor in the nineties. The changing character of the population was reflected in the interest of many citizens in such intellectual activities as opposed to those primarily physical which previously predominated. This shift toward intellectual activity was demonstrated in a letter to the editor of the Bulletin in 1890:

We do not enjoy the privilege and benefit of a reading room at present....Yet it is essential and needful because reading is and ought to be one of the first and greatest factors of a thoughtful and useful life, and a man cannot be very useful and deeply thoughtful without it. All distinguished men have been given to the habit of constant reading, and the slightest distinction and importance are impossible without it. "Reading" says Bacon "makes a full man; conversation a ready man; writing an exact man." Every man to be replete, perfect and opportune, must be a constant reader....Let us be and not seem.¹⁰

The lecture continued as a frequent form of entertainment throughout the decade. At first, most were delivered by men of the cloth and served utilitarian ends such as that by the Rev. Geo. W. Dean, of Calgary, who delivered a lecture on "The Land We Live In" in the Methodist Church in aid of the Methodist minister's superannuation fund,¹¹ or that by the Rev. S. Pritchard, of Benson, Minnesota, who

10. Bulletin, November 22, 1890.

11. Bulletin, April 2, 1892.

spoke on the advantages and prospects of the Edmonton district.¹²

Gradually, the professional encroached upon this 'holy' territory. W. A. Douglas, for example, delivered a lecture in the fall of 1892 on "Patience, Pluck and Perseverance."¹³ Another by a Professor J. K. Rae gave delineations of Scottish life and character. The event was somewhat more elaborate than others with a series of limelight views of Scottish scenery on one night and limelight views of English and Irish scenery on the next.¹⁴ Lectures by ministers did not die out, however, as one in 1895 by Rev. Jas. Morrow on "An Irishman's Impressions of America" demonstrated. These too, however, became more elaborate. Rev. Morrow's lecture, for instance, was preceded by a piano duet and a choir rendition of "Oh Balmy Night." The lecture was followed by another number by the choir this time accompanied by pianos and cornets.¹⁵

A trend in entertainment new to this decade in Edmonton was the local minstrel show. It was an amateur affair given by white men probably with blacked faces. In most cases the minstrel show was put on by an organization as a fund raising activity. The first one mentioned was sponsored by the Edmonton baseball club in the spring of 1892. A handsome sum was realized for the funds of the club.¹⁶ These shows were held with increasing popularity throughout the nineties.

12. Bulletin, May 30, 1892.

13. Bulletin, August 11, 1892.

14. Bulletin, October 6, 1892.

15. Bulletin, June 24, 1895.

16. Bulletin, March 12, 1892.

The entertainment given attempted a Southern flavor, unfortunately resulting in slight racist tones.¹⁷ The songs rendered included "Mary's Gone Wid a Coon" and "Whistling Coon" in the 1892 concert.¹⁸ In 1896 a group known as "The Komical Koons" carried on the tradition with such numbers as "The Dandy Coloured Coon" and "The Alabama Coon."¹⁹ Songs were not all of this rather less than tasteful quality. Others included "Roll Boatman Roll," "Swanee River," "Gwine to the Silver Wedding" and "Ise Gwine Back to Dixie."²⁰ Many of the numbers were accompanied by a banjo to complete the 'cotton' atmosphere.

At the end of the decade, a new entertainment fad called the smoking concert gained prominence. This function was little more than a variation of the local amateur concert. For example, in 1899, the Bulletin described one in which "Two long tables provided with cigars and refreshments were prepared...and guests...sat down for a pleasant and sociable evening."²¹ A programme consisting of vocal duets, trios, violin solos and whistle numbers was listened to, one would imagine amid considerable cigar smoke. Like the concerts previously, the smoking concert was often held to raise money for a local organization.

17. This attitude was demonstrated, as discussed earlier, toward the local Indians as well. Editorials in the Bulletin demonstrated the same sense of superiority over the Chinese and Jews.

18. Bulletin, March 12, 1892.

19. Bulletin, May 28, 1896.

20. Bulletin, March 12, 1892.

21. Bulletin, April 10, 1899.

Chapter II

The First Road Shows

The Edmonton of the 1890's was an active community "with settlers piling off the trains, with log booms catching the timber from the vast forests to the west and mills cutting it into lumber."¹ The community had grown from five hundred in the last decade to well over one thousand by 1895. Edmonton was ready for the 'big time' in entertainment.

The first professional touring company, the Caroline Gage Troupe arrived in the spring of 1892. The Bulletin wrote: "The appearance of the first professional theatrical troupe marks an era in the progress of civilization here...."² By the end of the decade, twenty-seven professional performing groups would have come and gone, some two or three times.

The arrival of this first troupe³ must have been an exciting event for the inhabitants. Frank Oliver of the Bulletin thought it important enough to quote in advance of the troupe's arrival a review from the Brandon Times which stated that the Caroline Gage Company was the best such organization that visited Brandon that winter. The plays were considered high class, the scenery very good, the costumes beautiful and the acting decidedly above the average.⁵ He quoted also a review from the Calgary Herald which stated that in that city the leading members of the company did themselves great credit.⁶

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1. J. G. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History [Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig Publishers, 1967], p. 119.
 2. Bulletin, May 26, 1892.
 3. Jolayne Sillito incorrectly attributes this honor to the Clara Mathes Co. in October of 1900.⁴
 4. Sillito, Community and University Theatres, p. 17.
 5. Bulletin, May 26, 1892.
 6. Bulletin, June 2, 1892.

The troupe's success in Edmonton, however, was not as great. The inclement weather which the town was experiencing must have had a dampening effect on the outlooks of its citizens for though "The playing was good and the costumes elegant...the terrible downpour of rain which greeted the audience as they left the building, skimmed the cream off most of the jokes."⁷

Nevertheless, the first two plays presented, Galatea and The Honeymoon, the latter an adaptation of The Taming of the Shrew, played to full houses. However, by the third night, the company feared a decrease in attendance due to the wet weather and made arrangements with local teamsters to have their teams call for the playgoers and return them at the close of the performance at a charge of twenty-five cents each.⁸ The strategy turned out to be successful, for Mr. Barnes of New York played to a fair house although the rain was heavy and the roads very muddy.⁹

The troupe felt it necessary, nevertheless, to extend their stay in order to recoupe their interests. It is difficult to determine whether they did or not, for the sizes of the audiences fluctuated during the next four nights from small houses for Damon and Phythias and Oliver Twist to large houses for Our American Cousin and Our Boys for which every possible space was occupied.¹⁰

The second group to play in Edmonton arrived in the fall of the same year. The Fax Company met with more success than did the Caroline

7. Bulletin, June 2, 1892.

8. Bulletin, June 2, 1892.

9. Bulletin, June 6, 1892.

10. Bulletin, June 6, 1892.

Gage Company for the Bulletin claimed that full houses were the order of the day.¹¹ They even extended their stay for an additional two nights. The company was well appreciated by Edmontonians: "The Fax concert company had an enthusiastic reception and their efforts to amuse the audience met with unstinted applause. The ladies were encored time and time again and Messrs. Fax's and Cameron's songs were, to quote an American contemporary, 'too funny for anything.'"¹² An amusing incident that probably was more likely frustrating to the performers occurred on the first night. The "...concert had just got underway when the toll of the firebell was heard, the audience immediately left the hall and...never came back."¹³ The company performed for five nights in Edmonton, with a different programme each night.

In September, 1892, W. S. Robertson, Edmonton's sheriff, completed construction of a hall that was to house theatrical activities in Edmonton for the next fourteen years.¹⁴ The location was given in 1892 as Main Street, opposite the junction of Namayo Avenue. Tony Cashman claims that this was just east of the present Dreamland Theatre.¹⁵ The building was called Robertson's Hall, in later years increasingly referred to as the

11. Bulletin, August 18, 1892.

12. Bulletin, August 18, 1892.

13. Bulletin, August 18, 1892.

14. Early in the decade Fielder's Hall and McLeod's Hall housed most of the public gatherings. After 1895, Hurston's Hall was increasingly referred to. Taylor Hall was mentioned in the Bulletin in 1898, but as far as can be determined none of these structures were used for professional theatrical entertainment.

15. Tony Cashman, The Edmonton Story [Edmonton: The Institute of Applied Art Ltd., 1960], p. 237.

Opera House. Despite the fact that there were other halls in existence, the Bulletin claimed that the building would fulfill a great need to Edmonton, "as the town had never before had a hall such as was necessary for people to meet in comfortably for instruction, recreation or amusement."¹⁶

Robertson's Hall was a frame building forty-five feet by sixty-five feet, two stories high. The lower storey was divided into two stores.¹⁷ A stairway led from the street front to the hall which occupied the whole upper floor. The stage was four feet high, and eighteen feet deep across the whole end of the building. One dressing room was located at each side of the stage, probably on stage level. Footlights were arranged across the front. Over the stairway, a gallery was built that was capable of accommodating about twenty people. The total seating capacity according to Frank Oliver was three hundred.¹⁸ To Edmontonians the hall was "...the Edmonton temple of music and the drama..."¹⁹ and had a real atmosphere about it even though it was jerry-built and roughly finished.²⁰

Five months after it was built an arch was constructed over the stage in order to "...admit of the arrangement of a curtain and scenery usual in a well appointed theatre."²¹ A curtain and scenery were

16. Bulletin, September 15, 1892.

17. A. B. Watt, "Fifteen Years of Edmonton Theatre Going," [an article in a theatre programme for The Maid of the Mountains produced for the opening of the New Empire Theatre, Edmonton, 1920], p. 5.

18. Bulletin, September 15, 1892.

19. Watt, "Edmonton Theatre Going," p. 5.

20. Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 237.

21. Bulletin, February 9, 1893.

purchased from a Chicago supply house which were "...not excelled in style or taste in any city in Canada."²²

"...if there was to be a hot time in the old town tonight, it would be at Robertson's Hall and Opera House."²³ Until it burned down in 1906, the hall was used for almost every local public gathering and, except for the odd exception, housed every road company in the nineties. People danced, or attended the dramatic and musical performances that made the place an opera house.²⁴

The hall was built near a cliff. It was not long before chunks of the cliff began peeling off and diving to the valley below.²⁵ Tony Cashman relates an amusing incident which occurred when the tenor, Harold Jarvis, sang there some years later:

Mr. Jarvis became a trifle nervous when he got upstairs in the wooden building, and asked...how they were to get out if a fire started. The only stairway he could see was at the back of the hall, a long way from the stage. [It was]...explained that it was quite simple to get out. A sort of hatchway behind the stage [was opened]...to an iron ladder nailed to the outside wall. This ladder led to a precipitous mountain path, which went another 200 feet straight down the cliff. Mr. Jarvis recoiled in horror at the sight of this escape route, which he considered better suited to a mountain goat than to a tenor

22. Bulletin, February 9, 1893.

23. Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 237.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

getting on in years.²⁶

The Allyn and Kelly Concert Company was the first touring troupe to play in the new hall. Unfortunately, however, the company seemed a poor one to professionally inaugurate the structure, and received small attendance. The Bulletin stated:

This was not altogether due to the town being out of funds.

The trouble was that Allyn was no good and that Kelly was not up to specifications....Mr. Allyn's specialty appears to be the wearing of a plug hat and long coat when off the stage. His specialty on the stage has been carefully concealed from the Edmonton public.²⁷

The James Fax Concert Company returned to Edmonton again in the summer of 1893. Only the leading man was the same, however, for the company had split earlier in the spring. The members of this season's tour, nevertheless, were also "...first class in every particular."²⁸ They were received with great enthusiasm:

Although the company is small in numbers the entertainment given includes greater variety and higher degree of excellence than would seem possible. The question is not, 'What can they do?' but 'What is there that they cannot do and do well,' in the musical line....They are funny without being offensive and give the best of music without any of the insufferable airs usually assumed by such excellent singers.²⁹

26. Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 238.

27. Bulletin, March 20, 1893.

28. Bulletin, July 20, 1893.

29. Bulletin, July 24, 1893.

The original members of the troupe that had left James Fax, formed their own company called The Toronto Ideal Concert Company. They were the next professional group to perform in Robertson's Hall. The Ideals were also very well received for entertainment value: "They are first class artists and give a first class entertainment throughout";³⁰ and for their educative value as well: "People who like good music should not fail to attend the concerts....The value of a good musical entertainment is not confined to the pleasure received at the time; its chief value to the majority of people is in its educative effect."³¹

As early as 1893, troupes still did not travel to the Northwest during the winter months, so Edmonton did not see another touring entertainment until the following spring. Mrs. J. M. Ellis, phrenologist and physiognomist, arrived in April of 1894.³² The Bulletin made a curious statement regarding her performance: "...this gifted lady will travel far before she strikes another town quite as mellow as Edmonton proved to be."³³

This year saw only two other companies at Robertson's Hall. The first, which appeared in June, was the Sim Fax Concert Company.³⁴ This troupe generally gave the same type of entertainment as the previous musical companies, consisting of musical comedy pieces, vocal, piano and violin numbers.³⁵

30. Bulletin, August 3, 1893.

31. Bulletin, July 31, 1893.

32. Bulletin, April 23, 1894.

33. Bulletin, April 23, 1894.

34. -not to be confused with the James Fax troupe that came earlier.

35. Bulletin, June 21, 1894.

The second company to appear in 1894 marked a high point in professional entertainment in Edmonton at this time. On July 30th, the Bulletin announced that an advance agent for the McKee Rankin Dramatic Company had arrived and billed the troupe for the following two nights.³⁶ McKee Rankin was one of the leading actors and managers in America at the turn of the century and his troupe was considered among the best then touring.³⁷ It was not usual for Edmonton to receive performers of this caliber in the nineties and the arrival of Mr. Rankin and his company was certainly an exception. Their visit to the Northwest was

...not in their natural line of business, but having been held by the great strike while at Great Falls, Montana, on their way to San Francisco, they decided to come north and put in the time intervening...on the Canada side.³⁸

The Company produced three plays in Edmonton. The first was The Canuck, a French-Canadian comedy. The Bulletin was impressed with the whole cast, which included George Ulmer and Beth Ross, but particularly with McGee Rankin, himself, who as Jean Baptiste Cadeux made

....a jovial, good natured French-Canadian farmer, practical and matter of fact in the extreme, ever fond of his horses and farm animals, sturdy and industrious; but having no sympathy for railroads, banks or any scheme whereby money passes out of his hands to be controlled by others.³⁹

36. Bulletin, July 30, 1894.

37. Bulletin, July 30, 1894.

38. Bulletin, July 30, 1894.

39. Bulletin, July 30, 1894.

His witticisms were so original and natural that the audience was kept convulsed throughout the evening.⁴⁰

The McGee Rankin Company's second play was Forget-Me-Not, a drama "...somewhat tragical in its bearings."⁴¹ In this play, the reviewer was impressed with the acting of Miss Jeffrey Lewis. On the final night of their engagement the company produced a drama of western life, The Danites.⁴²

Edmonton saw no dramatic or concert company throughout 1895.⁴³ February of 1896, however, brought the first dramatic troupe to venture into this part of the Northwest in winter. The Fraser Dramatic Company played The Private Secretary, Jane and Face to Face.⁴⁴ The first play was "...generally conceded to be their most successful effort and was extremely funny."⁴⁵

The only other touring show to play Edmonton in 1896 was Neil Burton's in May. No further mention was made of the show other than the pre-performance announcement which stated that he was spoken of highly by the papers of all towns where he had appeared. Neil Burton must have been well-known to Edmonton audiences for the article added that tickets for the show were selling fast and the promoters were

40. Bulletin, August 2, 1894.

41. Bulletin, August 6, 1894.

42. Bulletin, August 6, 1894.

43. In April, 1895, the Bulletin wrote that C. A. Carson presented limelight views at Robertson's Hall.

44. Bulletin, February 17, 1896.

45. Bulletin, February 17, 1896.

expecting a large audience.⁴⁶

The winter of 1896-97 was without any professional entertainment in Edmonton, but the summer months of 1897 showed a slight increase over previous years. The Harry Lindley Comedy Company was the first one to arrive that year. This company was very highly thought of and made much of in the Bulletin. The announcement of their forthcoming performance included a review from the Winnipeg Tribune. This device was only used for performing groups of rare merit. The company played a week's engagement in Robertson's Hall, and was very well received as illustrated by the review of their first production, Flower of the Forest:

Mr. Lindley in the low comedy role of the 'Kinchin' aroused unrestrained merriment, particularly in the dance scene in the second act, when the laughter and applause was loudly and incessantly prolonged. Miss Mathes, for her splendid impersonation of Cynthia, the gypsy maid, received well merited applause, and Josh. M. Chapman in the tragic role of 'Ishmael' shared the honors of the evening with her.⁴⁷

The other plays produced here were, Little Lord Fauntleroy with Harry Lindley's daughter in the title role, The Silver Bird, My Queen, The Weavers, Caste, Peck's Bad Boy and The Castaways. The latter play was a nautical melodrama written by Mr. Lindley himself and it gave Edmonton its first taste of spectacle. A scene of a storm and a sinking ship in the third act aroused great applause, even though a

46. Bulletin, May 14, 1896.

47. Bulletin, May 10, 1897.

play of this nature, "...required considerably more stage room than the company had here, before it could be seen to proper advantage, but notwithstanding these disadvantages, the performance was very successful."⁴⁸

Jean Morris Ellis, the phrenologist, returned in July and gave a series of lectures on human nature in Robertson's Hall. One such lecture was called Love, Courtship, Marriage and Matchmaking which was "...amusing but not binding."⁴⁹ She made the most of her talents for she also gave private phrenological examinations with charts each day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Alberta Hotel.⁵⁰

The Cosgrove Company was the next to arrive and gave two excellent entertainments in Robertson's Hall.⁵¹ They were a variety company in every sense of the word for they also gave a largely attended kinetoscope matinee.⁵²

The last company of performers to play Edmonton in 1897 were the concert stars Miss La Dell and Miss World. They were highly regarded for the Bulletin claimed that "Seldom, if ever before, had the people of Edmonton had the opportunity of attending a concert of such artistic excellence...."⁵³ A later review revealed something of the nature of their performances:

Miss World's voice aroused for her great praise and much applause, while Miss La Dell proved herself an artist of

48. Bulletin, May 20, 1897.

49. Bulletin, July 5, 1897.

50. Bulletin, July 1, 1897.

51. Bulletin, October 9, 1897.

52. Bulletin, October 9, 1897.

53. Bulletin, October 18, 1897.

rare ability, Her rendition of a child's talk over the 35.
body of a dead kitten was perfect.⁵⁴

The year 1898 brought more road companies than any other single year of the decade. January saw an entertainment of varied character by Sperry and Heath.⁵⁵

In February the Cosgrove Concert Company and the Hardy Ideals Concert Company gave simultaneous performances in Edmonton, another first for the town. The city was not yet large enough to support two shows at once it was thought, and this fact resulted in the Cosgrove's having an inter-company war with Hardy's Ideals.⁵⁶ The Cosgrove Company had, however, booked Robertson's Hall as early as January⁵⁷ so that at first it was announced that Hardy's Ideals would perform on the ground floor of the fire hall where a stage was to be erected.⁵⁸ However, four days later the Bulletin stated that they would instead perform in Taylor Hall.⁵⁹

The dispute, however, seemed unwarranted for the Bulletin noted that both companies played to good houses.⁶⁰ The Hardy Ideals, surprisingly, had been successful in filling the room to the limits of its not too extensive capacity and in fact had been compelled to turn a number of people away.⁶¹ Qualitatively, though, this company came out

54. Bulletin, October 21, 1897.

55. Bulletin, January 13, 1898.

56. Bulletin, February 17, 1898.

57. Bulletin, January 24, 1898.

58. Bulletin, February 17, 1898.

59. Bulletin, February 21, 1898.

60. Bulletin, February 24, 1898.

61. Bulletin, February 24, 1898.

second best because of the poor acoustics of Taylor Hall. Miss Ward was "...a vocalist of more than ordinary ability, but the size of the hall prevented her being heard to proper advantage!"⁶² said the Bulletin. The Cosgrove Company suffered no such disadvantage in Robertson's Hall, where, "Their programme as rendered was a decided improvement on the one presented on their former appearance here."⁶³ Like their previous performance the company presented a kinetoscope showing, this time, however, with the new 1898 Edison model.⁶⁴ They also introduced descriptive songs with stereopticon slides.⁶⁵

The Orris Ober Company arrived in May and produced An Arabian Night, Mr. Wright of Wall Street, Not Guilty and Mother and Son. The quality of the troupe must have been rather poor. It was only in Mr. Wright of Wall Street that the company scored a decided success.⁶⁶ After they had left Edmonton the true sentiments of the reviewer were revealed: "The Orris Ober Co. are giving away bicycles in Calgary as an inducement to people to attend their performances. They require some attraction of this kind."⁶⁷

Fred Emerson Brooks, the poet-orator, came next to Robertson's Hall in July and recited his own poetry.⁶⁸ He was followed later in the month by the Mackenzie-Glover Concert Company composed of William Mackenzie,

62. Bulletin, February 24, 1898.

63. Bulletin, February 24, 1898.

64. Bulletin, February 17, 1898.

65. Bulletin, February 24, 1898.

66. Bulletin, May 12, 1898.

67. Bulletin, May 19, 1898.

68. Bulletin, July 7, 1898.

the famous baritone and humorist,⁶⁹ and Jessie Glover, elocutionist and character artiste, granddaughter of the famous Scottish tragedian, Edmund Glover.⁷⁰ The pair played Edmonton as part of a tour of the world. Both performers were well-received, especially Miss Glover whose "...readings were cleverly given, particularly those containing scope for dramatic action. The scene from the 'Bonnie Fish Wife' made a decided hit and served to show most favorably the dramatic ability of Miss Glover."⁷¹

The Harry Lindley Company returned in August, at first to play a week's engagement. They performed May Blossom, Alone in London, The Upper Hand and The Charity Ball.⁷² The public appreciation of the company was so great, they decided to extend their engagement, and in addition performed A Noble Outcast and The Yukon Pioneer.⁷³ Each evening, the bill was interwoven with varied specialties such as singing, dancing and comic songs. A feature of the company's performances which added greatly to the evening's pleasure was the orchestra music furnished under the leadership of Herbert Wiley, "...a musician of more than average ability."⁷⁴

In September Professor Bernard Walther and Madame Walther gave a concert in Robertson's Hall, that, "...fully sustained their high reputations as musical artists."⁷⁵ The R. E. French Theatre Company was

69. Bulletin, July 18, 1898.

70. Bulletin, July 18, 1898.

71. Bulletin, July 21, 1898.

72. Bulletin, August 4, 1898.

73. Bulletin, August 8, 1898.

74. Bulletin, August 8, 1898.

75. Bulletin, September 26, 1898.

the last to play in Edmonton in 1898. This company of fifteen members played a week's engagement in December producing Our Boys, Hands Across the Sea, My Mother-in-Law, A Fair Rebel, The Danites, Dad's Girl and The Ticket-of-Leave Man.⁷⁶ This company was considered one of the best that ever visited Edmonton.⁷⁷ Among the members of this "very talented and well balanced company"⁷⁸ were R. E. French, "an actor of superior ability and excellent appearance and judgement";⁷⁹ Paul Bordman, "whose acting was first class";⁸⁰ H. P. Wilson, whose acting "was always up to high watermark";⁸¹ and C. A. Smiley, whose Jim Dalton in The Ticket-of-Leave Man was "out of sight."⁸²

January, 1899 brought the Patricolas to Edmonton, a father and daughter act that though not largely attended, was very successful as a musical entertainment.⁸³

The Clara Mathes Comedians appeared later the same month. Miss Mathes had played in Edmonton before as the leading lady of the Harry Lindley troupe. During the Mathes Company's engagement they presented Black Flag, The Unknown, Peck's Bad Boy, The Runaway Wife, Charley's Uncle, The Love Chase and Senator O'Rourke.⁸⁴

E. Pauline Johnson appeared in the Presbyterian Church in

76. Bulletin, December 8, 1898.

77. Bulletin, December 19, 1898.

78. Bulletin, December 19, 1898.

79. Bulletin, December 19, 1898.

80. Bulletin, December 19, 1898.

81. Bulletin, December 19, 1898.

82. Bulletin, December 19, 1898.

83. Bulletin, January 5, 1899.

84. Bulletin, January 16, 1899.

Edmonton in February. She recited much of her own poetry which was "...sweet and true...natural in tone, and savoured of Canada...."⁸⁵

Miss Johnson's performance was so successful that it was repeated in Robertson's Hall.⁸⁶ She returned to Edmonton again in May.⁸⁷ Walter McRaye, who was in later years to tour with the Indian poetess, wrote that she

...was a natural entertainer...equally effective in her dramatic Indian poems and in her dulcet canoeing verses.

Her bright skits, full of satire at some foible of society, gave her an opportunity for the display of the power of mimicry of which she was mistress.⁸⁸

The McPhee Dramatic Company appeared on the boards in Robertson's Hall in April. Their first presentation, Fanchon, the Cricket introduced two innovations into theatrical production in Edmonton. The first was a performance which was free from waits between acts. This performance lasted for three hours. The second innovation was "...the cold-blooded contortion of the lines to allow the introduction of advertisements of local merchant's wares."⁸⁹ This objectionable advertising feature, however, was eliminated after the first performance.⁹⁰ The company also produced The Midnight Call, East Lynne, Temptation of Money and Uncle Tom's Cabin. The latter play cast its spell over Edmontonians as well

85. Bulletin, February 27, 1899.

86. Bulletin, March 16, 1899.

87. Bulletin, May 8, 1899.

88. Walter McRaye, Pauline Johnson and Her Friends [Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1947], p. 6.

89. Bulletin, April 20, 1899.

90. Bulletin, April 24, 1899.

as the rest of the continent for the attendance at this play was a record-breaker for matinees.⁹¹

The Nix Family appeared in June. Their programme consisted of vocal and instrumental music, bell ringing, club swinging and selections on the cornet.⁹²

The Lyceum Dramatic Company performed the first Shakespearean play in Edmonton. On July 24, 1899, Othello was produced in Robertson's Hall.⁹³ Actually, the whole company was not present, for it had just completed a tour which had by-passed Edmonton and ended at the west coast. A number of players then decided to return east, working back and performing some of their plays, and scenes from the longer Shakespearean dramas.⁹⁴ Othello, however, was apparently presented intact. The company also performed in Jane, An Old Fool and presented scenes from Hamlet.⁹⁵

The Lindley Company returned once again in August and played in The Tender Footed Divine, one of "...the veteran actor-author's most successful productions."⁹⁶ They also produced Queen a, Everybody's Friend, Our Boys, and The Grocery Store.⁹⁷

91. Bulletin, April 24, 1899.

92. Bulletin, May 15, 1899.

93. Bulletin, July 24, 1899.

94. Bulletin, July 17, 1899.

95. Bulletin, July 17, 1899.

96. Harry Lindley wrote A Barnstormer, a book which was a collection of anecdotes and reminiscences of the author's acting career. It was on sale in Edmonton during the company's fall tour in 1898.

97. Bulletin, August 14, 1899.

The last group to play in Edmonton before the new century was the Big Four Musical and Hypnotic Company. The musical portion of the act was by the Govellos, "...both clever musicians...and worthy of particular mention."⁹⁸ The hypnotic features of the entertainment were given for the first time in Edmonton by Professor Mobius. The novelty was so well received that the company played three nights instead of two as originally intended.⁹⁹

The great influx of road companies into Edmonton in the late nineties created a need for a more sophisticated theatre. In February W. S. Robertson announced that several alterations were to be made to the hall. However, nothing immediately became of his plans until November, when under the new proprietorship of N. Wright, several improvements were made "...so as to fit it more thoroughly for theatrical purposes."¹⁰⁰

Mr. Wright's plans contemplated an entirely new stage built in an opening cut in the rear of the building to form a proscenium four feet six inches wider than the one existing. The stage was to be enlarged to eighteen feet in depth. Two additional dressing rooms and a property room were to be placed below the stage, access to which was to be by two flights of stairs from the rear of the stage. A driveway was to be run outside below the property room so that props could be brought by wagon directly under it and hoisted by pulleys through it to the stage. A gridiron was to be installed above the stage in order that scenery could be manipulated from above. The proscenium was to be decorated with fluted

98. Bulletin, December 8, 1899.

99. Bulletin, December 8, 1899.

100. Bulletin, November 14, 1899.

and molded pilasters and molded and sunk panelwork. Mr. Wright also planned to purchase stock scenery from a leading Chicago supply house.¹⁰¹

Except for the amateur dramatic group organized by Robert Strachan in 1886¹⁰² and for an amateur dramatic entertainment given in Robertson's Hall in October, 1892 in aid of the Church of England organ fund,¹⁰³ the first amateur group organized that did any active producing was the Edmonton Amateur Dramatic Company. In April, 1896, the company produced Betsey, "...a most amusing play in three acts "¹⁰⁴ in Robertson's Hall. Proceeds were in aid of All Saints' Church and the Edmonton General Hospital.¹⁰⁵

The production which was "...presented in a style that would do no discredit to professionals,"¹⁰⁶ was well received and encouraged the group to produce La Cigale in July.¹⁰⁷ Two months later, "...after an unheard of only thirteen days of rehearsal, "¹⁰⁸ the group produced Three Hats.¹⁰⁹ With a repertoire of three plays, the company changed its name to La Cigale Comedy Company, and on September 22, 1896, embarked

101. Bulletin, November 13, 1899.

102. Bulletin, November 20, 1886.

103. October 24, 1892. The entertainment was composed of two farces, Ici on Parle Francais and Chiseling and a number of songs and instrumental music.

104. Bulletin, April 2, 1896.

105. Bulletin, April 2, 1896.

106. Bulletin, April 9, 1896.

107. Sillito, "Community and University Theatres," p. 5.

108. Bulletin, September 3, 1896.

109. Bulletin, September 3, 1896.

on a ten weeks' tour of Alberta and British Columbia.¹¹⁰ In October the group mailed a report to the Bulletin of their already varied experiences. They told of performing in Canmore, British Columbia, in a house twenty-five feet square in which the audience was forced to stand throughout the entire performance due to the cramped conditions.¹¹¹

On December 3, 1896, the company returned from a tour "...successful from every point except financially."¹¹² In January, the now seasoned troupe produced W. S. Gilbert's The Wedding March. Shortly after, F. de Journal, the company's director, left Edmonton for San Francisco¹¹³ and the group ceased to exist. No further amateur dramatic activity was encountered in Edmonton until the next decade.

110. Bulletin, September 14, 1896.

111. Bulletin, October 8, 1896.

112. Bulletin, December 3, 1896.

113. Bulletin, January 21, 1897.

Part III

The Thistle Rink Theatre

and

The Edmonton Opera House Years

By 1901, Edmonton's population had doubled to two thousand six hundred and twenty-six from one thousand one hundred and sixty-five of 1895.¹ Three years later the population had reached eight thousand three hundred and fifty and the city took on twenty-four hundred additional acres.² By the end of 1908, the city's population had increased to eighteen thousand five hundred!³ There were several reasons for this phenomenal growth. Among the most important were the Klondike Gold Rush, and the expanded immigration policy of a sometime westerner, Clifford Sifton, Sir Wilfred Laurier's Minister of the Interior. In these next years immigrants came by the thousands from the United States, whose free lands in the west had already been overtaken, and from the British Isles and Germany.

But most colorful and strange of all were the Slavs who on their arrival in Canada were dubbed Sifton's Sheepskins.

These Poles and Russians, but mainly the people we know as Ukrainians, usually penniless and seeking new land and freedom, began to fill the steerage of ship after ship.⁴

November of 1903 saw the first publication of Edmonton's second newspaper, the Edmonton Journal. A year later came the first car. According to the Bulletin, the new carriage created quite an excitement on Jasper Avenue especially among the horses and small boys.⁵ The first half of the decade saw Edmonton incorporated a city and Alberta a

1. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History, p. 216.

2. Ibid., p. 132.

3. Ibid., p. 171.

4. Ibid., p. 126.

5. Bulletin, May 26, 1904.

province. In 1905 too, the city's own transcontinental railway became a reality.⁶

By the end of the decade, the number of business ventures had grown amazingly. For example, by 1908, Edmonton had forty building contractors,⁷ thirty-five physicians, seventeen loan companies, twenty hotels, eighteen restaurants and eleven banks.⁸

From the sidewalks rose a babble of languages. These varied all the way from the soft accents of negroes coming to take up land, to the sing-song of passing Chinese, and the soft sibilants of Cree-speaking half-breeds. Broad Scotch brogues competed with the idiom of Yorkshire and Lancashire, Cockney voices challenged the dialects of western, central or southern United States, while on every hand, scores of other immigrants conversed in Scandanavian, Slavic or Germanic tongues.⁹

This frontier character seemed at odds with the budding modernity of the city. In 1906 Edmonton had become the Capital of Alberta. As such she boasted over six miles of sewers and over fifteen miles of water mains,¹⁰ some paved streets, a telephone system,¹¹ a street railway,¹² a golf course and a stadium.¹³ By the end of the decade a new university

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6. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History, p. 147.

7. Ibid., p. 173.

8. Ibid., p. 166.

9. Ibid., p. 142.

10. Ibid., p. 143.

11. Ibid., p. 158.

12. Ibid., p. 169.

13. Ibid., p. 167.

was well in operation and the city also boasted a police department with eleven officers and a fully equipped fire station,¹⁴ seven public schools, one separate school, two colleges and five hospitals.¹⁵

14. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History, p. 173.

15. Ibid.

Chapter I

Playhouses

In October of 1899 the South African war broke out. While many Canadians took part many more Britishers were involved and for the first few years of the new century the professional road companies almost ceased touring. In 1900 only the Clara Mathes Company¹⁶ and the Alba Heywood Company¹⁷ played Edmonton. During the whole summer, in fact, there was no professional entertainment at all. The next year scarcely showed any improvement. Not one troupe came in 1901. Madame Albani, then an internationally famous Canadian singer, was the only celebrity Edmonton saw that year.¹⁸

The Boer War ended in May of 1902 and gradually the touring companies returned. By the end of the year the Clara Mathes Company, The Cosgrove Merry Makers and the Clara Hanmer Company had come and gone.

The 1890's were by far more active theatrically than these first years of the twentieth century. It was really not until 1906, that a marked increase in theatrical activity in Edmonton was felt.

For the first five years of the decade Robertson's Hall continued to house those few professional road companies and entertainers that came to Edmonton. In 1902, Thistle Rink was opened on 102nd Street just north of Jasper Avenue.¹⁹

A huge, hip-roofed, barn-like structure,²⁰ this building was for some years to dominate at all community affairs. During the summer, with the ice gone, the building afforded an alternative stage to Robert-

16. Bulletin, October 8, 1900.

17. Bulletin, October 22, 1900.

18. Bulletin, April 26, 1900.

19. Balmer Watt, Edmonton Journal, September 23, 1949.

20. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History, p. 131.

son's Hall for professional entertainment also, and was then often referred to as Thistle Rink Theatre.²¹

For the first few years of its existence, Thistle Rink was still dominated by Robertson's Hall. Before 1906 companies were few and its services were not especially required. During this time, however, the Rink was popular with Edmontonians for local events. In the winter time, of course, it was used for skating often with a local orchestra accompanying the skaters. During the summer, with the ice gone, the building took on the guise of a hall. In 1904, for example, the Bulletin reported a grand concert and ball given by the local lodges A. F. and A. M. to the officers and visiting members of the grand lodge of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.²² Because of its size, the Rink was frequently used for dances and balls. The Operatic and Dramatic Society held a fund raising dance in September of 1904²³ and on the twenty-sixth of the same month, a Grand Ball in aid of the Edmonton Public Hospital was held there.²⁴

Because Thistle Rink was the coolest place in town²⁵ numerous other events were held there too, such as a popular concert by the local Apollo orchestra which included a grand gymnastic display, club swinging, songs from the Geisha, humorous monologues and a dance.²⁶

21. Bulletin, July 8, 1904.

22. Bulletin, June 10, 1904.

23. Bulletin, September 9, 1904.

24. Bulletin, September 26, 1904.

25. Bulletin, July 8, 1904.

26. Bulletin, July 8, 1904.

In April, the Rink's coolness was not especially appreciated, however. When the Harold Nelson Company played there in 1905, it was necessary to advertise that aside from being dried out, arrangements had been made to thoroughly heat it.²⁷ Instead its increasing popularity was due to the fact that, as the Bulletin stated, its stage was "probably the largest west of Winnipeg, while the lighting could hardly be bettered."²⁸ As a result, beginning in 1905, Thistle Rink began to encroach upon Robertson's Hall as the preferred theatre in the spring, summer and early autumn months. The fact that it could hold many more people must have been an added factor for its popularity. By the end of the year almost every touring group played there instead of at Robertson's Hall.

In November, 1905, J. C. Griffith announced that the present stage was to be torn away and a complete up-to-date opera stage installed.²⁹ The Bulletin prophesied that the Rink with its spacious auditorium, improved and enlarged stage, and good seating, would be an excellent place for the entertainment of lovers of the drama and opera who resided in Edmonton.³⁰ However, it was to be another year before the Rink could achieve such an honor. By the end of the month, the floors had been flooded and the Rink re-opened for skaters.³¹

Mr. Griffith's plans did not bear fruit until the following spring of 1906 when the new stage was completed in May.³² New scenery was put

27. Bulletin, April 8, 1905.

28. Bulletin, April 8, 1905.

29. Bulletin, November 3, 1905.

30. Bulletin, November 3, 1905.

31. Bulletin, November 28, 1905.

32. Bulletin, May 7, 1906.

in and the whole lighted with five hundred electric lamps. According to the Bulletin, Edmonton could now boast a stage larger than any other in Western Canada.³³

By 1908, however, the Edmonton Opera House had taken over as the main legitimate playhouse in the city. The Thistle Rink Theatre was made over into a roller skating rink in the summers and seldom used for performances.³⁴

In 1906, Robertson's Hall burned down while a small dance was in progress. Luckily a theatrical performance was not being staged for the building was certainly a bad fire trap with its location on the second floor and only one exit onto a narrow stairway. According to Tony Cashman, the fire broke out about midnight, halfway through the dance:

The dancers had just stopped for supper when the fire started in a storage shed outside the building. A policeman came in. He told the party there was little danger but they'd better come outside until the fire was under control. The dancers marked their plates and coffee cups, expecting to be back in a few minutes. But they never came back. Standing around outside they watched the flames jump to the main building and burn it to the ground.³⁵

It was probably the loss of Robertson's Hall that prompted C.V. Semerad, proprietor of the Saint Elmo Hotel, to organise a company in order to build an opera house on an empty lot at the corner of Rice and

33. Bulletin, May 7, 1906.

34. Bulletin, March 21, 1908.

35. Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 238.

Fraser Avenues.³⁶ The March announcement of the impending construction of the new Opera House stated that of the \$80,000 required, \$32,000 had already been offered and that the balance would undoubtedly be found without difficulty. The article stated that the building would cost \$40,000 and that the furnishings and cost of the site would bring the total investment up to the capitalization of the company formed for its construction. The new playhouse was to be furnished with a modern stage, and have all the scenic properties "requisite for the accomodation of the best companies on the road."³⁷ The construction was to include a spacious pit and two balconies capable of seating 1400 people.³⁸ An advertisement in the Bulletin in the fall of the same year, however, gave the seating capacity of the new hall at 1000.

This smaller seating capacity may have meant that the structure was not built as grandly as originally announced. Perhaps the needed total amount could not be raised. Something of this sort seems indeed to have happened for Bulmer Watt, reminiscing in 1949 stated that the new Edmonton Opera House had no gallery. "Few attempts were made to brighten the interior," he wrote, "and the stage facilities were very primitive."³⁹ His memory too may have been colored slightly by the more sophisticated theatres constructed later.

The new opera house opened on October 11, 1906 with entertainers

36. Bulletin, March 26, 1906. Bulmer Watt gave the present street locations as the corner of Third and Jasper in his programme article on the opening of the New Empire Theatre in 1920.

37. Bulletin, March 26, 1906.

38. Bulletin, March 26, 1906.

39. Watt, Edmonton Journal, September 23, 1949.

Claude Amsden and Hazel Davenport.⁴⁰ Although not completely finished inside on opening night, sufficient progress had been made to guarantee that when the finishing touches were put on, the hall would be a very comfortable and commodious one. According to a Bulletin reporter, the stage was large, the gridiron high enough to allow handling large scenery, the lighting arrangements good, and the acoustic properties of the first class.⁴⁴

In December of 1907 further improvements were carried out. The floor was raised at the back in order to allow it to slope toward the stage. This was a new and popular innovation at the time, instituted in some of the vaudeville houses as well. Also, the stage was enlarged in depth by twelve feet and four new dressing rooms furnished. New opera house chairs were installed and the foyer redecorated.⁴⁵ The opera house was certainly becoming more sophisticated, for the following month the Bulletin noted that the new program which the management issued was an acceptable innovation. Instead of the single sheet, the patrons of the Opera House now had an eight-paged program, in which they could refer to the cast. The program had a metropolitan air about it, being liber-

40. Bulletin, October 8, 1906. Jolayne Sillito incorrectly attributes the honor of the first performance in the new house to the Roscian Opera Company.⁴¹ Amsden and Davenport were indeed at one time members of this company and also played Edmonton with them.⁴² However, when they played the new Opera House they had formed The Claude Amsden Company⁴³ and were no longer associated with the Roscians.

41. Sillito, Community and University Theatres, p. 3.

42. Bulletin, October 8, 1906.

43. Bulletin, October 12, 1906.

44. Bulletin, October 12, 1906.

45. Bulletin, December 2, 1907.

ally patronized by advertisers and printed on good paper.⁴⁶

Although the Edmonton Opera House became the only structure to house drama and musical comedy for some time and remained the largest house of this sort until the Empire Theatre was built in 1909, it seemed to be in continual difficulty from the beginning. There were probably two major reasons for this. First, vaudeville was rapidly gaining dominance and luring the audiences away from the legitimate theatre [with the help of the new motion pictures, of course]. Secondly, it appeared that the Opera House was afflicted with managerial strife. The first problem was partly overcome by allowing vaudeville on the boards when more sophisticated entertainment was not available. For example, as early as the fall of 1906, the Bulletin advertised the Douglas Vaudeville Troupe at the Opera House.⁴⁷ Throughout the decade other vaudeville troupes appeared such as the Twentieth Century Entertainers,⁴⁸ The Harriss Novelty Trio,⁴⁹ The Marion Sisters⁵⁰ and Gloria Dare.⁵¹

Nevertheless the Opera House was several times in these first few years of its existence forced to close either through lack of patronage, lack of performers or poor management. Several times throughout the decade the Bulletin referred to the Opera House as being dark for various lengths of time.⁵²

46. Bulletin, January 13, 1908.

47. Bulletin, November 8, 1906.

48. Bulletin, May 21, 1907.

49. Bulletin, July 14, 1907.

50. Bulletin, July 30, 1907.

51. Bulletin, May 18, 1908.

52. Bulletin, June 1, 1908; Bulletin, July 10, 1908.

The administrative difficulties reached a climax in 1908 when Mrs. Cameron, part owner of the building, sued the managers, Willis and Cosgrove of Calgary for fraud. The Bulletin's court reporter recorded that Mrs. Cameron's lawyer put forward a claim that:

The defendants owned an interest in many opera companies, particularly the Beggar Prince Opera Company, of which they were the sole owners for six weeks while the latter was in Alberta. The defendants, as managers of this company, made an agreement with themselves as managers of the opera house regarding the appearance of this company in Edmonton. He claimed that this was fraudulent and that the receipts from this company should be turned into the partnership account and divided equally.

The defendants claimed that they made a fair agreement with the opera house on a percentage basis, giving the company 75 and the house 25 percent of the receipts. They argued that they had not acted fraudulently.⁵³

The Opera House went dark for some time immediately after the court case and intermittently thereafter. In June when for a time it was again in darkness, Lee Brandon, the local manager, removed to another frame theatre at the rear.⁵⁴ The Bulletin proudly announced that Edmonton was to take another step in its course towards a metropolitan city by the opening of the new playhouse. The house had been well equipped and had one of the finest interiors of the small theatres in the west. There was a commodious balcony and four boxes which would comfortably accomodate

53. Bulletin, July 10, 1908.

54. Watt, Journal, September 23, 1949.

fully five hundred people.⁵⁵ The Dominion Theatre became Edmonton's third playhouse to house drama [as opposed to vaudeville and motion pictures]. For the first time in the city's history two playhouses were staging plays at the same time. A month later the new theatre completed decoration of a new entrance on Jasper Avenue. The Bulletin claimed that this gave it all the appearance of a metropolitan theatre. "The new Jasper avenue entrance is undoubtedly one of the handsomest lobbies in the west."⁵⁶

The new lobby at the Dominion Theatre was thrown open to the public for the first time in July of 1908. The scheme of decoration was carried out in dark oak and scarlet. The electrolier and other fittings in connection with the lighting arrangements were impressive novelties, the former being an especially artistic piece of work. A candy counter and ice cream parlor, as well as ladies' retiring room were also in the process of installation.⁵⁷ Edmonton had certainly come a long way in theatrical buildings from the hall above two stores in use only two years before!

The new Dominion was originally the old Kevin Theatre, a vaudeville house that had gone dark. It was financed by A. W. Cameron, a well-known local theatrical man.⁵⁸ The building was re-decorated throughout and new fire exits added.⁵⁹ At first it was announced that Mr. Cameron's

55. Bulletin, June 1, 1908.

56. Bulletin, July 4, 1908.

57. Bulletin, July 7, 1908.

58. Bulletin, April 21, 1908.

59. Bulletin, May 28, 1908.

new house would put on first class vaudeville and moving pictures.⁶⁰

However, it was decided a month later to instead produce the latest comedies and dramas.⁶¹ A stock company directed by manager Lee Brandon's brother with Jeanne Russell, its outstanding member, held the boards at the Dominion for most of 1908. Bulmer Watt estimated that Miss Russell, during the time that she spent in the city, must have played in at least fifty different roles and that the talent she brought to them was very real.⁶²

Miss Russell's company, known as the Dominion Stock Company, allowed for lower prices to be charged for their shows. The lower prices, fifteen, twenty-five, thirty-five and fifty cents for boxes⁶³ were appreciated. The Bulletin claimed that Edmonton theatre goers should appreciate the Dominion Theatre with its complete comfort and beauty and also for the fact that it had brought popular prices to the city.⁶⁴ Apparently the prices were popular with the theatre goers too, for soon the Opera House followed suit: "For the first time in Edmonton, theatre-goers will be able to see a fine musical comedy company at popular prices," wrote the Bulletin, "as the management of the Opera house, has decided to charge only 15¢, 25¢ and 35¢...."⁶⁵

Perhaps one way in which manager Brandon managed to provide up-to-date plays at popular prices will be explained by the following article

60. Bulletin, April 21, 1908.

61. Bulletin, May 28, 1908.

62. Watt, Journal, September 23, 1949.

63. Bulletin, June 4, 1908.

64. Bulletin, July 9, 1908.

65. Bulletin, July 7, 1908.

titled "Brandon's Enterprise" reprinted in the Bulletin from the New York World. The article also throws light on various theatre practices of the time:

The doings of a Mr. Brandon, manager of the Dominion Theatre, in Edmonton, Canada, have formed a topic for much heated conversation lately in the offices of Chas. Frohman, Wagenhals and Kemper, the Shuberts and Eugene Walter; the young dramatist, has been spinning on his ear, metaphorically speaking, ever since a certain programme from Mr. Brandon's theatre met his eye. Mr. Brandon operates a stock theatre in Edmonton, and he certainly has a nice, up-to-date taste in the matter of selecting plays. This week he is giving "Paid in Full", soon he will give "The Wolf", to be followed by "The Thief" -and others- all of the very latest, and not one of which has yet been offered for stock in this country.

'Stop 'em' thundered Walter. 'How dare he give my plays without saying 'boo' about it or paying a cent of royalty? I'll get an injunction! I'll -'

But all this was of no avail. Mr. Brandon's case was simply a repetition of many others. He has evidently purchased copies of the plays from a play pirate in Chicago, who takes a stenographer to the theatre with him when he wants a play, and sells the copies at \$10. per. Wagenhals and Kemper took the matter up with the National Association of Theatrical Producing Managers and received a reply to the effect that there was no way to proceed against Mr. Brandon. American copyright laws do not protect the work of authors in Canada, and if he could get the manuscript, Mr. Brandon, could produce a new play

in his Dominion theatre the same night it is first played on Broadway.⁶⁶

The audience must have received quite a scare on opening night at the Dominion. The National Stock Company was about to perform the first play in the new theatre and the capacity of the balcony was taxed to such an extent that one of the posts supporting it began to settle. This caused a dramatic flight on the part of some in the audience, just as the curtain rose on the first act. The disturbance was quieted in a few minutes and the audience of fully six hundred people settled down to a good show.⁶⁷

Only one other house staged plays during this decade in Edmonton and that for a very brief time. On June 30, 1908, the Bulletin recorded the opening of the Victoria Theatre by Jeanne Russell's company, with the production Maloney's Wedding. The house was described as "nicely decorated, well lighted, cool and airy...."⁶⁸ However, soon Jeanne Russell's group, under the name of the Dominion Stock Company took over production at the new Dominion Theatre and the Victoria Theatre was never mentioned again.

66. Bulletin, September 15, 1908.

67. Bulletin, June 8, 1908.

68. Bulletin, June 30, 1908.

Chapter II

Movies and Vaudeville

"Early in the twentieth century Edmonton began to feel the pulse of the theatre world outside her."¹ In no branch of theatre was this new pulse felt more than in vaudeville. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century this new theatrical form was established in Edmonton in six different theatres built specifically for the genre. By 1910 vaudeville was a way of life for most Edmontonians and the motion picture no longer a novelty. The new theatrical form gradually encroached upon the drama so that by the time the Empire Theatre was built in 1909 companies touring the latest Broadway drama and musical comedy diminished. Shakespeare and the classics were almost unheard of. The touring drama did not give out, however, for its greatest period was still to come. The villain was not in vaudeville but in the moving picture which at first supplemented the songs, dances and jokes of vaudeville. Gradually this infant genre turned on the one that had weaned it. With vaudeville dead, the movies rebelled against the touring companies and killed them too. But this was not to happen yet.

The new stereopticon and the bioscope made the odd appearance in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century at Robertson's Hall. In 1900, for example, bioscope pictures were shown in aid of the public hospital. One would judge that since fifty dollars was cleared the innovation was fairly popular among Edmontonians.²

In 1903, again at Robertson's Hall the 10,000 Bioscope from the Palace Theatre, London, England, was presented which showed animated pic-

1. Sillito, Community and University Theatres, p. 16.

2. Bulletin, November 16, 1900.

tures of 'living Canada' representing a three thousand mile run through the Dominion "including the sights, march and progress of the world."³ That the show was taken seriously and greatly enjoyed is only too evident in the Bulletin's review:

The moving pictures entertainment in Robertson Hall last night was one of the best of its kind ever held in Edmonton and when one appears it is all the more greatly enjoyed. The hall was packed to the doors and fairly good order prevailed. Many of the pictures thrown on the canvas were exceedingly interesting, instructive and beneficial. Others, shown to give amusement, provoked a great deal of laughter. The military views were especially realistic and the astrologers trip to the moon,...was exceedingly attractive and entertaining. The entertainment throughout was one of an especially refined and elevating nature.⁴

At first the bioscope made the occasional one night stand. By 1904, a longer run of three nights was advertised with a complete change of programme each night. By 1906, the Bulletin advertised one week of solid entertainment with a two hour moving picture show graphically portraying the earthquake and fire in San Francisco. This was to be the "most thrilling spectacle ever witnessed of the Frisco disaster."⁵

The Edmonton audience rapidly became more sophisticated in its tastes and the novelty for its own sake was no longer enough. In 1905, the Peer-

3. Bulletin, September 2, 1903.

4. Bulletin, September 9, 1903.

5. Bulletin, June 8, 1906.

less Entertainers presented a programme of stereopticon pictures which included "life-size panoramic views of the Passion Play, Ben Hur, the Russo-Japanese war, and other attractions."⁶ Although a good audience greeted the company at the Thistle Rink, "the entertainment was rather a disappointment, and many people left before it was over."⁷ Again, in August of the same year, the Bulletin reported that a moving picture of Packs' Bad Boy at the Thistle Rink "was as bad as the boy ever was. It was hardly up to an old fashioned backwoods magic lantern show, and even the small boys left in disgust, shouting 'Rotten' as they left the rink."⁸

When vaudeville deluged Edmonton after 1906 with the building of the first vaudeville house, moving pictures became a daily experience. Though no longer a novelty the movies were as popular as ever at the end of the decade. In 1908 the motion pictures that reached Edmonton were not only silent, they contained no subtitles to indicate what the actors were saying. Some kind of dialogue seemed necessary, so A. R. Lawrence, the owner of the first full-time movie projector in Edmonton,⁹ used to stand

6. Bulletin, July 17, 1905.

7. Bulletin, July 18, 1905.

8. Bulletin, August 17, 1905.

9. Mr. Cashman tells an interesting anecdote about how Edmonton's first permanent projector came to stay:

The first projector belonged to Mr. A. R. Lawrence's brother-in-law in Freemont, Ohio. And this historic machine slipped into Canada unnoticed. At least it was unnoticed by the customs. Yes, Mr. Lawrence was worried about the tariff the customs might demand to allow the thing into Canada. So when the guardian of the border glowered at the trunk, and asked, 'Anything to declare?' Mr. Lawrence began tentatively, 'Well, there's a pair of shoes I bought in Detroit...' 'Have to charge duty on those,' said the customs man. He collected and moved on with no more questions. So the movie machine was on its way to Edmonton to stay.¹⁰

10. Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 100.

by the projector and give a play-by-play account of the action.¹¹ On one occasion, Mr. Lawrence's associate decided to inject some real sound effects into a wild west show:

So he went behind the screen with a pistol full of blank cartridges. When a silent shot was fired on the screen, Mr. Hamilton was going to accompany it with a realistic bang from behind the screen. The first bang went off on schedule, but then the pistol jammed during an exciting chase. Mr. Lawrence had to jump to his feet and shout: 'Believe me folks, there's a lot more shots than that being fired.'¹²

When a short film on coal mining, or lumbering, or growing tobacco came in, Mr. Lawrence went to the library and studied the particular subject until he could discuss it for the time necessary for the film to run its course.¹³

On June 26, 1906, the first exclusively vaudeville playhouse north of Calgary¹⁴ was opened in Edmonton. The building was instigated by O. C. Ross, of Minneapolis, who was so impressed by the outlook of the city that he opened negotiations to provide him with a house.¹⁵ The Bulletin announced the house to be thirty by eighty, with a spacious stage and a seating capacity that would comfortably accommodate four hundred people.

11. Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 102

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Bulletin, June 26, 1906.

15. Bulletin, May 19, 1906.

The street front was to be built after the colonial portico style.¹⁶ The new vaudeville house was named the Empire Theatre and opened with refined vaudeville, motion pictures and illustrated songs. There were to be four shows each day, each programme lasting one hour and twenty minutes. The theatre advertised a change of programme every week. This format varied little in all the later houses for the rest of the decade. The admission was somewhat lower than that for the drama, at ten, fifteen and twenty-five cents.¹⁷

In July, the Empire Theatre advertised in the Bulletin that the house had been placed upon the International Circuit. As a result all performances were to be of the best calibre direct from the metropolitan theatres of the United States.¹⁸ After being placed on the new circuit, a bill such as the one slated for the week of August 16, 1906, though perhaps shorter than those in later years, was for the most part typical. It consisted of moving pictures of The Great Regatta, The Whole Dam Family and the Dam Dog, Incendiary, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and The Villain Cutup.¹⁹ Illustrated songs and various vocal and instrumental numbers presented live by touring vaudeville artists became more common in the following years.

Then in March of 1907 a news item was printed that the now 'old' Empire Theatre on McDougall Street was being renovated by Messrs. Fowler and McKinnon in order to re-open as another vaudeville house. The new

16. Bulletin, May 19, 1906.

17. Bulletin, June 23, 1906.

18. Bulletin, July 17, 1906.

19. Bulletin, August 16, 1906.

playhouse was to be called the Bijou.²⁰ The theatre opened with the regular type of vaudeville programme and again closed by the end of the year only to open again in July, 1908 under the same name.²¹ By its sporadic runs it appeared that the vaudeville house was having a difficult time, as was the theatre of the regular drama, The Opera House.

Despite the erratic runs at the Bijou, its proprietors, Messrs. Fowler and McKinnon apparently felt that Edmonton could sustain another vaudeville house, and proceeded in the spring of 1907 to build a bigger and finer one on Jasper Avenue.²² The new building was to have a seating capacity of twelve hundred²³ and be the "most up-to-date place of amusement in the city."²⁴ The Bulletin of 1908, however, stated that the house when enlarged had a seating capacity of only six hundred.²⁵ The stage was apparently tastefully decorated and provided with the best mechanical equipment for the manipulation of scenery. Like the renovated Opera House, the floor dipped toward the stage, giving an excellent view from any part of the house. The Orpheum was also the first house mentioned to provide an electrical mechanism "to promote circulation of pure air."²⁶

Like its sister house, the Bijou, and several others that were to

20. Bulletin, March 1, 1907.

21. Bulletin, July 27, 1908.

22. Bulletin, May 28, 1907.

23. Bulletin, May 28, 1907.

24. Bulletin, September 23, 1907.

25. Bulletin, August 25, 1908.

26. Bulletin, September 23, 1907.

follow, the Orpheum also got into the habit of changing hands and closing and re-opening.²⁷ After a re-opening in 1908, the building was enlarged even further with an additional one hundred seats on the main floor and another two hundred in the new balcony, bringing the total seating capacity to over six hundred.²⁸

Four other vaudeville houses were built before the end of this decade, the Kevin, the Lyric, the Palm Gardens and the Grand. The Kevin Theatre was built by A. W. Cameron of the Edmonton Opera House in the spring of 1907. This house, with a seating capacity of four hundred and fifty was located on Third Street.²⁹ Apparently A. W. Cameron was indeed a man of the theatre, for the Kevin was on a circuit of five other houses that he controlled.³⁰ This playhouse had a short life, however, and was destroyed by fire in July of 1907 less than three months after it was built.³¹

The Lyric Theatre, with a seating capacity of two hundred was opened on Jasper avenue a month after the Kevin was destroyed. The Palm Garden opened on the corner of McDougall and Clara in the spring of the next year.³² The Bulletin reported that it was moved to another location on east Jasper the following month.³³

In January, 1908, a jewellery store was converted into the Grand

27. Bulletin, November 6, 1907; August 25, 1908.

28. Bulletin, August 25, 1908.

29. Bulletin, May 28, 1907.

30. Bulletin, June 25, 1907.

31. Bulletin, July 22, 1907.

32. Bulletin, June 24, 1908.

33. Bulletin, July 18, 1908.

Theatre under the management of R. L. Fowler, formerly one of the proprietors of the Bijou and Orpheum Theatres.³⁴ Like its sister vaudeville houses, it too closed and re-opened time and again, and like the other houses also underwent an occasional refurbishing.³⁵ However, unlike all the others in this decade, the Grand did not limit itself strictly to vaudeville. Musical comedy was presented amid vaudeville acts and moving pictures.

The Grand Musical Comedy Company was formed, headed by the celebrated comedian Monte Collins and Miss Norma Wills "known throughout the United States and Canada as artists of the very best that could be engaged for this class of show."³⁶ During the summer and early fall of 1908 this company presented a continual series of musical comedies on a comparatively small scale. In July they produced Three Men in a Cupboard,³⁷ Which is Which,³⁸ Neighborly Neighbors,³⁹ The Twins' Christening,⁴⁰ The Dangerous Tyrant,⁴¹ A Terrible Night,⁴² and The Telephone Girl.⁴³

34. Bulletin, November 14, 1907.

35. Bulletin, November 14, 1908.

36. Bulletin, July 21, 1908.

37. Bulletin, July 7, 1908.

38. Bulletin, July 17, 1908.

39. Bulletin, July 22, 1908.

40. Bulletin, July 23, 1908.

41. Bulletin, July 27, 1908.

42. Bulletin, July 30, 1908.

43. Bulletin, August 3, 1908.

In August, the company presented Dixie Girls,⁴⁴ Incubator Babies,⁴⁵ A Rajah for a Day,⁴⁶ Polly Primrose⁴⁷ and A Night Off.⁴⁸

The first production in September was a Spanish playlet written by Norma Wills called Senorita.⁴⁹ A satirical travesty also written by Miss Wills followed called The Voyageurs.⁵⁰ Next came The Thunderbolt, unique because it included in its cast Master Jack Wynn, a young man from Edmonton.⁵¹ The Isle of Bing Bing was the last musical comedy produced by the Grand Musical Comedy Company.⁵²

In October, the Grand Theatre was placed on the Sullivan-Considine Circuit which included several American cities and twenty-two houses in Western Canada, including Winnipeg.⁵³ The theatre re-opened in November and musical comedy was replaced entirely by vaudeville and movies.⁵⁴

Between the years 1904 and 1908, the Bulletin recorded five series of plans to construct additional vaudeville houses in Edmonton that did not bear fruit. The sudden growth in the city and the great popularity of vaudeville could be attested by this fact alone. These plans included

44. Bulletin, August 7, 1908.

45. Bulletin, August 25, 1908.

46. Bulletin, August 31, 1908.

47. Bulletin, August 31, 1908.

48. Bulletin, September 5, 1908.

49. Bulletin, September 14, 1908.

50. Bulletin, September 18, 1908.

51. Bulletin, September 23, 1908.

52. Bulletin, August 27, 1908.

53. Bulletin, November 15, 1908.

54. Bulletin, October 28, 1904.

one by Geo. Tempest of the Calgary Theatre, who in 1904 contemplated a \$15,000.00 structure;⁵⁵ another by F. Fitzgerald and H. Bowen who planned to build a \$20,000.00 edifice and even went so far as to address the city council in order to obtain permission to build out of wood instead of brick.⁵⁶ Great plans were also made by Chas. H. Stuart Wade and Wm. Spurrell to build a theatre with a seating capacity of twelve hundred. Another building to seat twelve hundred that was never built was seriously discussed by H. J. Murphy of Fargo, North Dakota a year later.⁵⁷ This seating capacity must have been considered an ideal one for Edmonton, for in 1908, S. Nankin, of the Grand Theatre contemplated constructing one such theatre on First Street.⁵⁸

55. Bulletin, May 20, 1905.

56. Bulletin, November 27, 1906.

57. Bulletin, May 28, 1907.

58. Bulletin, November 23, 1908.

Chapter III

Musical Entertainments

The first musical comedy and light opera company of the twentieth century arrived in Edmonton in 1904. Maloney's Wedding Company, according to the Bulletin was heralded as one of the greatest comedy attractions that had ever toured Canada.¹ Despite the relatively high admission charges of one dollar, seventy-five cents and fifty cents,² the company played to a large and very appreciative audience at Robertson's Hall. The reviewer reported that even though the company was at a disadvantage in not having time to arrange their scenery and were late in starting, the audience still maintained a condition of boisterous hilarity throughout the performance. Maloney's Wedding Company played Edmonton for two nights.³

The same month, the Beggar Prince Opera Company arrived and had the distinction of being the first company to appear in the new Thistle Rink Theatre.⁴ This group consisted of twenty-six artists and two comedians, Fred A. Wade and Stanley Flich.⁵ They performed La Mascotte [or The Beggar Prince],⁶ Said Pasha,⁷ Fra Diavolo,⁸ The Mikado,⁹ Olivette¹⁰ and

1. Bulletin, June 14, 1904.
2. Bulletin, June 11, 1904.
3. Bulletin, June 16, 1904.
4. Bulletin, June 28, 1904.
5. Bulletin, June 18, 1904.
6. Bulletin, June 28, 1904.
7. Bulletin, June 29, 1904.
8. Bulletin, June 30, 1904.
9. Bulletin, July 2, 1904.
10. Bulletin, July 2, 1904.

Girofle-Girofla.¹¹ The company provided a great deal of spectacle¹² and was popular with audiences¹³ and critics.¹⁴

The Beggar Prince Opera Company returned to Edmonton in the fall of 1904 but owing to insufficient advertising the audiences were not as large as the company's merits warranted.¹⁵ Also, they appeared in Robertson's Hall this time and the stage there was too small for the company to be heard to advantage.¹⁶ They repeated the same operas as on their first engagement.

The company came back to Edmonton in 1908, seemingly more popular than on their first two appearances. The Bulletin paid a great deal more attention to them than it had done before and its reviews for each of their productions were unusually long.¹⁷ On this engagement, the Opera Company played in The Circus Clown, Fra Diavolo, La Mascotte, The Mikado and The Chimes of Normandy.¹⁸

By far the most popular and well known of the musical comedy companies was the Roscian Opera Company which played Edmonton four times in two years. In June of 1905, they played a week's engagement at

11. Bulletin, July 4, 1904.

12. Bulletin, June 18, 1904.

13. Bulletin, June 30, 1904.

14. Bulletin, July 4, 1904.

15. Bulletin, October 28, 1904.

16. Bulletin, October 28, 1904.

17. Bulletin, February 27, 1908.

18. Bulletin, February 27, 1908.

Thistle Rink Theatre.¹⁹ With a cast of thirty²⁰ they presented the musical comedies El Capitain, The Mikado, Ermine, The Telephone Girl²¹ and The Bohemian Girl.²² On the whole these productions, as well as their later ones, were very well appreciated by the reviewers and the audiences.²³

The company returned in the fall for another week's engagement. They repeated their spring programme²⁴ and added Fra Diavolo and The Chimes of Normandy to their bill.²⁵

In the fall of 1906 the Roscians played at Thistle Rink again with almost a complete change of programme. They repeated Fra Diavolo and The Mikado and introduced Mascotte, Pinafore, Martha and Girofle-Girofla.²⁶ Their great popularity was attested to also by the fact that from the first announcement in August of their impending arrival²⁷ until their first performance, almost every issue of the Bulletin carried either an article about an individual member of the cast²⁸ or a full advance review from another centre in which they had played.²⁹

19. Bulletin, June 22, 1905.

20. Bulletin, June 23, 1905.

21. Bulletin, June 28, 1905.

22. Bulletin, June 29, 1905.

23. Bulletin, June 28, 1905; June 29, 1905; November 21, 1905; November 22, 1905.

24. Bulletin, November 14, 1905.

25. Bulletin, November 21, 1905.

26. Bulletin, August 11, 1906.

27. Bulletin, August 11, 1906.

28. Bulletin, August 25, 1906, for example.

29. Bulletin, August 15, 1906; August 17, 1906; August 18, 1906.

Three months later the company returned once more "bigger and better than ever."³⁰ Most of the comedies on the bill were those played at previous engagements in Edmonton. New additions included Pirates of Penzance, Said Pasha and Cavalleria Rusticana.³¹ The most popular member of the company was Lucia Nola, as the following excerpt from the Bulletin's review of Martha indicated:

It was worthwhile attending the opera...to hear the "Last Rose of Summer," sung as it was by the leading lady, Miss Nola. Its effect was slightly marred by over acting -something to which the graceful Lady Harriet was prone throughout the play- but the sweetness and expression of the voice that caressed the old ballad were enjoyed. With all Miss Nola's proness to posing, which may arise from over anxiety to fill her conception of the part she is otherwise so appealing that one would like to see Miss Nola's voice, face and temperament, and her evident ambition utilized in a stronger emotional part in some larger company compelled by a severe dramatic Master to greater naturalness.³²

Several other lesser musical comedy companies made single appearances in Edmonton. The Ansdén Musical Company played a two night stand in October of 1906 and produced The Mascot and The Governor's Wife.³³

In November, 1906, the Zinn Musical Travesty Company advertising

30. Bulletin, November 9, 1906.

31. Bulletin, November 9, 1906.

32. Bulletin, November 16, 1906.

33. Bulletin, November 2, 1906.

"One continuous, refreshing stream of girls, music and laughter"³⁴ held the boards at the Edmonton Opera House for one week with a change of bill nightly.³⁵ This company which proved popular with Edmontonians³⁶ produced Teezy Wheezy,³⁷ The Jolly Muskateers,³⁸ Two Married Men,³⁹ The Sultan of Morocco⁴⁰ and A Japanese Courtship.⁴¹ Jessie Brown proved the most popular member of the company. On the evening of the Zinn's production of The Jolly Muskateers Miss Brown introduced the 'toe dance' as a special feature, a novelty which took very well.⁴² When The Japanese Courtship was on the boards she danced the 'upside down dance',⁴³ and on another evening packed the house with the Highland Fling and Sword Dance.⁴⁴

In December of 1906, the Marie Fountain Theatre Company of twenty-two people plus a full band and orchestra played a week's engagement at the Edmonton Opera House. Their programme included The Gambler's

34. Bulletin, November 15, 1906.

35. Bulletin, November 15, 1906.

36. Bulletin, November 20, 1906.

37. Bulletin, November 20, 1906.

38. Bulletin, November 21, 1906.

39. Bulletin, November 22, 1906.

40. Bulletin, November 23, 1906.

41. Bulletin, November 15, 1906.

42. Bulletin, November 21, 1906.

43. Bulletin, November 21, 1906.

44. Bulletin, November 24, 1906.

Wife, The Right Track and Mother and Son.⁴⁵

The year 1907 brought the famous Scarlet Mysteries from London, England. This celebrated combination of eight artists was crossing Canada en route for Australia and while in Edmonton presented the latest London novelties in refined musical comedy.⁴⁶ It appears, however, that they were more of a vaudeville troupe than a musical comedy company since no specific play was mentioned. The Bulletin's review which stated that it was a lightning sketch artist who evoked the heartiest applause seems also to indicate this.⁴⁷ In April "the past three seasons' greatest laughing success,"⁴⁸ Stephens and Linton, presented My Wife's Family. The company which apparently played for one night was headed by the comedians Appleton and Perry.⁴⁹ William McGowan's Comedy Players followed a few days later and played in A Double Elopement.⁵⁰ This company, as did some of the others, included vaudeville between the acts of their production.⁵¹

In April, 1908, the Wills-Collins Musical Comedy Company played a week's engagement in the city.⁵² With the Manhattan Beatty Chorus of Pretty Singing Girls, they produced The Senorita, Don't Miss the Bull-

45. Bulletin, December 8, 1906.

46. Bulletin, January 21, 1907.

47. Bulletin, January 28, 1907.

48. Bulletin, April 20, 1907.

49. Bulletin, April 20, 1907.

50. Bulletin, April 24, 1907.

51. Bulletin, April 23, 1907.

52. Bulletin, April 15, 1908.

fight, The Irish Alaskan and The College Girls.⁵³ The principals of the company were Monte Collins and Norma Wills⁵⁴ who were to form the Grand Musical Comedy Company in July.

June brought the more lavish Grace Cameron Opera Company, "one of the best companies appearing west of Winnipeg."⁵⁵ This troupe was larger than most with a cast of fifty and carried its entire production with it.⁵⁶ Advance articles printed in the Bulletin indicated that the Cameron productions were extraordinarily elaborate affairs,⁵⁷ and the reviewers were duly impressed.⁵⁸ Miss Cameron, herself, was a Broadway favorite and her company consisted of some of the best known artists on the American stage.⁵⁹ Still, the troupe recognized no principals!⁶⁰ Her group produced Little Dollie Dimples, The Beauty Doctor and The Hindoo.⁶¹

"Admittedly the best light opera organization in America"⁶² came to Edmonton in 1908. The San Francisco Opera Company which embraced thirty-eight people was apparently the largest operatic production to

53. Bulletin, April 18, 1908.

54. Bulletin, April 20, 1908.

55. Bulletin, April 15, 1908.

56. Bulletin, June 18, 1908.

57. Bulletin, June 20, 1908.

58. Bulletin, June 23, 1908.

59. Bulletin, June 12, 1908.

60. Bulletin, April 15, 1908.

61. Bulletin, June 18, 1908.

62. Bulletin, August 30, 1908.

come to Alberta.⁶³ It also appeared to be one of the most spectacular companies for it arrived with two carloads of scenery.⁶⁴ Various pictures of scenes from their productions in the Bulletin bear this out. The company produced Fantana, The Toymakers, The Strollers, Ermine and Girofle-Girofla.⁶⁵

The San Francisco group was followed by The National Opera Company. Their bill differed from the usual run of light operas and included Offenbach's The Grand Duchess,⁶⁶ His Highness the Boy, Billee Taylor⁶⁷ and A Friend of the Family.⁶⁸

The concert companies that were also very popular during the late nineteenth century in Edmonton, were more numerous in this decade than the musical comedy groups. The first such troupe, the Alba Heywood Company, arrived in 1900. Their fame in other parts was demonstrated by the very high praise lavished on the company by the review in the Fort Worth Doily Register, reprinted in the Bulletin.⁶⁹ Their popularity in Edmonton was demonstrated by the necessity to convert the entire plan of Robertson's Hall into reserved seats.⁷⁰ The company's performance of unusual excellence consisted of impersonations by Alba

63. Bulletin, September 17, 1908.

64. Bulletin, September 17, 1908.

65. Bulletin, September 17, 1908.

66. Bulletin, October 31, 1908.

67. Bulletin, November 3, 1908.

68. Bulletin, November 10, 1908.

69. Bulletin, October 22, 1900.

70. Bulletin, November 5, 1900.

Heywood, violin solos by Gertrude Monroe, and numbers by the cellist Gustave Ulrich and the soprano Emilie Cole.⁷¹

In 1902 the Cosgrove Merry-Makers gave musical selections and musical sketches at Robertson's Hall,⁷² followed a month later by the Alabama Warblers whose programme consisted of violin solos by Professor McKanlass as well as coon songs, cog dancing, cake walks and jokes.⁷³

The Jimmie Fax Concert Company returned to Edmonton in the fall of 1903 and again in the spring of 1906. Fax's was the most popular group in the concert category. The review of the 1903 performance in Robertson's Hall entitled "Jimmie Fax, the irresistable, takes Edmonton Audience by storm," said:

Every available seat was reserved and people paid their dollar expecting to hear a high class entertainment. The programme far surpassed their expectations. Jimmie Fax's...appearance on the stage was the signal for uproarious applause. His lightening changes of costume added to the enjoyment of the evening.... The character impersonations sent the audience into cheers of approval and delight.⁷⁴

The rest of the programme consisted of piano solos, songs, readings and dancing by other male and female members of the troupe.⁷⁵

The Firth-Eaton Concert Company came with a similar programme in 1903 and also in 1906, and were followed by the Marador Goulding Company. The

71. Bulletin, November 5, 1900.

72. Bulletin, January 24, 1902.

73. Bulletin, February 17, 1902.

74. Bulletin, September 16, 1903.

75. Bulletin, September 16, 1903.

latter group made history of a sort in Edmonton as being the first professional troupe to suffer a really scathing review at the hands of an Edmonton newspaper:

A well-filled house greeted the company...but the show was one of the rankest to which an Edmonton audience was ever subjected. The entire show was shocking in the extreme and a large portion of the audience who were beguiled to attend by Winnipeg press reports of the entertainment, left during the course of the programme. Three women and a girl composed the entire cast and for rank coarsness and indecency this show holds the palm. There were some attempts made at dramatic renditions, but instead of demanding the close attention of the audience, they inspired ridicule and laughter. The actions of one of the individuals of the party was exceedingly revolting. Dressed in an exaggerated ballet dancer's costume she proceeded to murder a couple of ancient coon songs.

Their sex was the only thing that saved the party from the very liberal application of stale hen fruit. The little girl executed several dances which were very well done but to see a slight little creature such as she thus disporting herself was pathetic, not entertaining. The child must be excused for not knowing better....The Winnipeg press deserves a great censure for the favorable press notices this style of concert company receives. This has been the company's first visit to Edmonton and it is hoped that it will be its last.⁷⁶

Other concert companies on the whole fared better and included The

76. Bulletin, September 21, 1903.

Watkins Mills English Concert Party in 1905, the Dominion Concert Company,⁷⁷ the Bellharz Entertainers in 1906⁷⁸ and the Kenny-Harvey Concert Company in 1907.⁷⁹

Choirs and especially individual vocalists toured Canada in large numbers at the turn of the century also. Edmontonians became very excited in 1903 when the impending arrival of The Westminster Abbey Choir was announced. The group was also referred to as The Coronation Choir, Glee and Concert Party for they had just taken part in the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra.⁸⁰ The majority of the choir consisted of delightful little chaps in Eaton jackets and Westminster school caps, as well as Herbert Hilton, one of the foremost singers in England, Percy Cowards and Marie Hooton.⁸¹ This was certainly one of the greatest musical events that happened in the annals of the town.⁸² The choir returned again in 1906 and sang in the new Opera House.⁸³

The year 1905 saw the Harmony Male Quartette⁸⁴ and 1906 the Carolinian Jubilee Singers. The latter company had a very impressive repertoire of three hundred songs including solos and quartettes, and

77. Bulletin, June 18, 1906. This company was reviewed in the Bulletin as "one of the best that has visited Edmonton".

78. Bulletin, December 24, 1906.

79. Bulletin, December 7, 1907.

80. Bulletin, February 3, 1903.

81. Bulletin, February 3, 1903.

82. Bulletin, February 3, 1903.

83. Bulletin, October 13, 1906.

84. Bulletin, May 17, 1905.

old plantation and negro melodies.⁸⁵

Among individual vocalists Madame Albani was undoubtedly Canada's greatest diva⁸⁶ and made even a bigger impact in Edmonton than any other performer in the musical line. In an advance article in the Bulletin, A. Bridle claimed that as an all round exponent of vocal music in its broadest sense, the great French-Canadian diva had probably no living superior of her sex.⁸⁷ Until her performance in Robertson's Hall three months after the above article, Madame Albani was the talk of Edmonton. The Bulletin ran article after article about her artistry, her accompanists, and her affairs:⁸⁸ Edmontonians were told, for example, that she rendered two hymns before the body of Queen Victoria at Windsor⁸⁹ and sang again in the chapel at Osborne, where very few persons were admitted.⁹⁰ Finally, the day arrived, and "the old queen of song had come and gone."⁹¹ So successful and popular was Madame Albani that the total sale of seats for her concert aggregated over eight hundred dollars.⁹² Also,

...the man in the street could tell you at a glance which of the strangers registered at the Alberta was Madame Albani, which was 'Mr. Albani' and the military looking Hungarian who

85. Bulletin, November 24, 1906.

86. Bulletin, May 7, 1906.

87. Bulletin, February 18, 1901.

88. Bulletin, March 11, 1901; March 29, 1901; April 5, 1901.

89. Bulletin, March 11, 1901.

90. Bulletin, March 29, 1901.

91. Bulletin, April 26, 1901.

92. Bulletin, April 26, 1901.

played the violin and the florid Italian who piped and the tall stately brunette who sang contralto;...also the big shouldered rubicund man who sang baritone and the bushy locked Saxon who fingered the piano....⁹³

Except for the fact that some of her numbers were not rendered in English, Madame Albani's appearance was an artistic success too. Perhaps, though, a slight disappointment was to be detected in the Bulletin's review of the performance after the enormous buildup previous to her appearance:

...the far north is ready to forgive her stage coquetry and her skirt fantasies and her acrobatic performances and the twisting of the right corner of her mouth just for the sake of hearing her sing.⁹⁴

But, all in all, it was necessary "to bow the head, and say she is a great voice and a great figure in the musical stage and a great work of nature."⁹⁵

Madame Albani returned to Edmonton in 1906 on a farewell tour of Canada.⁹⁶ As much was made of her this time as before and during her first engagement. An article in the Bulletin stated that immense crowds were greeting her everywhere:

The closing scenes of the Ottawa farewell concert are said to have surpassed in interest that of any Albani appearance....

93. Bulletin, April 26, 1901.

94. Bulletin, April 26, 1901.

95. Bulletin, April 26, 1901.

96. Bulletin, April 2, 1906.

After she had been recalled ten times at the conclusion of her closing number...Earl Grey and Sir Wilfred Laurier led the audience in giving three hearty cheers for the Canadian queen of song.⁹⁷

In Montreal three concerts were given, the last in the arena, the largest auditorium in the city which was crowded with an enthusiastic audience. The Western portion of the tour surpassed that of any other single artist.⁹⁸ In Edmonton Madame Albani played to a capacity audience in Thistle Rink which included Lieutenant Governor Bulyea of Alberta, Premier Rutherford and Attorney General Cross.⁹⁹ Before leaving the city Madame Albani expressed her pleasure with the Edmonton visit in a note: "With many thanks -I was delighted with your Edmonton public."¹⁰⁰

Second only to Madame Albani was Harold Jarvis, the great tenor who sang in Edmonton in 1905 and 1906. According to the Winnipeg Free Press, it was "always such a treat to hear Harold Jarvis. One sits back in his seat in comfort knowing that, whatever the songs, there is a certain enjoyment ahead."¹⁰¹ Mr. Jarvis had a voice combining richness, resonance and power, and manipulated it with rare skill.¹⁰²

Numerous other vocalists of lesser fame appeared through the decade too. They included Ethel Webb and W. G. Hodsdon who came in 1900;¹⁰³

97. Bulletin, May 2, 1906.

98. Bulletin, May 7, 1906.

99. Bulletin, May 10, 1906.

100. Bulletin, May 12, 1906.

101. Bulletin, May 11, 1905.

102. Bulletin, May 11, 1905.

103. Bulletin, March 16, 1900.

Queenie McCoy, Isabel Kerr,¹⁰⁴ Edna Sutherland, Murielle Patton,¹⁰⁵ Manett La Dell and Miss Stone¹⁰⁶ all who came in 1903. Rosa D'Erina sang in Edmonton in 1904,¹⁰⁷ Miss Forsyth in 1907¹⁰⁸ and Louise Brehany in 1908. Miss Brehany was considered America's greatest soprano and caused considerable stir in musical circles in Edmonton.¹⁰⁹

Orchestras and individual instrumentalists demanded their fair share of Edmontonians' appreciation as well. The Cosgrove Orchestra played at Robertson's Hall in 1902 for two nights. Apparently, however, the financial outcome was not of a satisfactory nature.¹¹⁰ More popular were the Palmatier Sisters Concert Orchestra Company who appeared at Robertson's Hall in 1905,¹¹¹ at the Edmonton Opera House in 1906¹¹² and at the Dominion Theatre in 1908.¹¹³ This orchestra was composed of five sisters, "gifted to a remarkable degree not only with extraordinary musical talents, but also with attractive and winsome personalities...."¹¹⁴ Their artistic ability was apparently of international

104. Bulletin, February 9, 1903.

105. Bulletin, May 16, 1903.

106. Bulletin, May 16, 1903.

107. Bulletin, December 2, 1904.

108. Bulletin, May 11, 1907.

109. Bulletin, May 15, 1908.

110. Bulletin, March 21, 1902.

111. Bulletin, November 30, 1905.

112. Bulletin, November 23, 1906.

113. Bulletin, November 13, 1908.

114. Bulletin, November 14, 1908.

repute.¹¹⁵

Performers renowned for their individual instrumental ability who toured through Edmonton at this time included Professor Paul Szigetz, a violinist of remarkable ability,¹¹⁶ who played in 1903;¹¹⁷ and J. D. A. Tripp, "the most brilliant pianist before the Canadian public"¹¹⁸ who performed in 1905.

The year 1906 brought Josephine Regaal who played "seven instruments of a novel nature"¹¹⁹ and "the musical treat of the year" in the pianist Edward Parlovitz.¹²⁰ In 1907, the Edmonton stage was graced by Mr. F. Darimont, violin soloist and Gold Medalist of the Conservatory of Brussels.¹²¹

Entertainers who presented concerts that evinced a Scottish flavor abounded in these years. In 1901 Thos. J. Scott gave a programme consisting of Scottish and Irish anecdotes and songs in Robertson's Hall. Mr. Scott was remembered as a "sweet tenor singer."¹²²

Scotland was represented the next year by The Scottish Concert Company¹²³ and the year after that by The Jessie MacLachlan Company.

115. Bulletin, November 14, 1908.

116. Bulletin, February 17, 1903.

117. Bulletin, February 17, 1903.

118. Bulletin, July 12, 1905.

119. Bulletin, June 4, 1906.

120. Bulletin, November 28, 1906.

121. Bulletin, October 26, 1907.

122. Bulletin, April 1, 1901.

123. Bulletin, February 28, 1902.

Miss MacLachlan, a singer of world fame,¹²⁴ was well appreciated in Edmonton especially by the city's Scottish element. Her "almost limitless range of voice and sweetness of expression carried her audience with her....Her Gaelic songs were specially pure and sweet...and her violing imitation of the bagpipes...called for hearty applause."¹²⁵

Mannie Strachan and Gavin Spence were the next Scottish group to appear. Miss Strachan rendered her solos in a simple and unaffected manner and was enthusiastically applauded while Mr. Spence's Scottish jokes and songs were given with a vigor which thrilled the audience.¹²⁶ In 1907 the couple re-appeared in Edmonton. Miss Strachan was billed this time as "Scotland's greatest living soprano."¹²⁷ Their programme was titled: "Scotland in Song and Story."¹²⁸

The internationally reputed Kilties Band, a Canadian based group, made their initial appearance in Edmonton in 1907. By this time they had already toured over two hundred thousand miles in Canada, the United States, Mexico and Europe. Besides being one of the greatest concert bands in the world they had special features such as a male choir of sixteen trained voices and Highland dancers. The whole band appeared in full Highland costume.¹²⁹

Scottish music was not as marked in the programme as was hoped by the distinctly Scottish part of the audience, "but the fine skirl

124. Bulletin, March 20, 1903.

125. Bulletin, April 18, 1903.

126. Bulletin, May 22, 1906.

127. Bulletin, May 30, 1907.

128. Bulletin, May 30, 1907.

129. Bulletin, October 9, 1907.

of the bagpipes played by Fraser's Highlanders, and the Scotch reels delighted their hearts."¹³⁰ The concert included selections from Lohengrin and Tannhauser also.¹³¹ The Kilties made a second appearance in Edmonton in 1908.¹³²

Lena Duthie, the well known Scottish songstress¹³³ made her appearance in Edmonton in the fall of the same year.¹³⁴

Several all-Negro companies from the United States injected a great deal of spirit into the musical scene in Edmonton during the first decade of the new century. The first of these was the Black Diamond Minstrel Show which appeared in 1903.¹³⁵ William's Original Dixie Jubilee Singers came to Edmonton in 1905,¹³⁶ 1906¹³⁷ and 1907.¹³⁸ Their concerts consisted of solos, duets, quartettes and choruses. "Many of the numbers were the old numbers of the Sunny South, the plantation melodies whose popularity never fades. These were sung in the matchless harmony of negro voices in a way to leave little to be desired."¹³⁹

130. Bulletin, October 28, 1907.

131. Bulletin, October 28, 1907.

132. Bulletin, June 18, 1908.

133. Bulletin, November 12, 1908.

134. Bulletin, November 12, 1908.

135. Bulletin, April 21, 1905.

136. Bulletin, February 10, 1905.

137. Bulletin, May 29, 1906.

138. Bulletin, May 3, 1907.

139. Bulletin, February 10, 1905.

Two other negro companies came in 1905, The Hottest Coon in Dixie Company¹⁴⁰ and Williams and Stevens and their Company of Colored Comedians.¹⁴¹ The former company travelled in a private car¹⁴² and included "forty colored artists, pretty octoroons, a strong southern chorus and Professor Rheme's Imperial Band and Orchestra."¹⁴³ They also advertised catchy music and beautiful costumes.¹⁴⁴ In their spring engagement the company presented the musical comedy The Hottest Coon in Dixie¹⁴⁵ from which they derived their name. Their return engagement in the fall featured the play The Hottest Coon in Dixie's Trip Through Georgia.¹⁴⁶ The tone of the advertisements and reviews suggested plenty of spectacle, color and action with spirited songs and dances.

The Williams and Stevens Company preceeded the Coons' return engagement by a month and performed the successful musical farce comedy, The Richest Coon in Georgia.¹⁴⁷

In 1906 three negro troupes held the boards in Edmonton. Mahara's Big Minstrel Carnival came in July with twenty-four colored performers travelling in their own 'magnificent' private car. Among the principal features were Skinner Harris, "the greatest laughter producer of his

140. Bulletin, May 17, 1905.

141. Bulletin, September 19, 1905.

142. Bulletin, October 13, 1905.

143. Bulletin, May 27, 1905.

144. Bulletin, May 27, 1905.

145. Bulletin, May 27, 1905.

146. Bulletin, October 12, 1905.

147. Bulletin, September 19, 1905.

race";¹⁴⁸ James Harris and his eighteen trained hoops; Ed Fry and LeRoy Bland, the quaint Zulus; Count DeRobeo, 'unicyclist supreme'; and J. Jeff Smith, formerly leader of the colored band at the Columbian Exposition. Mahara's Minstrels was a combination of minstrelsy, light opera and vaudeville.¹⁴⁹

A few days later Richard's and Pringle's Minstrels appeared at the Thistle Rink Theatre with a band which played music of excellent quality.¹⁵⁰ G. Lote Silver's Minstrels performed at the Edmonton Opera House in the fall. They, however, were not as successful as their predecessors and the reviewer was forced to comment that the troupe were apparently "believers in Sullivan's remark that there is nothing new under the sun."¹⁵¹

Light opera companies composed entirely of children struck the fancy of Edmontians during the latter half of the decade. The Juvenile Bostonians were one such group and played in Edmonton in 1906 and 1907. Thirty child artists, aged from four to fourteen,¹⁵² molded by a "good deal of training and a great deal of affection,"¹⁵³ won the hearts of Edmonton's theatre goers in such musical comedies as Gypsy Girl, Tips, Gay-Go, The Rajah of Pazala¹⁵⁴ and Gee-Whiz¹⁵⁵ in 1906, and Dorothy and

148. Bulletin, July 17, 1906.

149. Bulletin, July 17, 1906.

150. Bulletin, July 30, 1906.

151. Bulletin, December 1, 1906.

152. Bulletin, March 28, 1906.

153. Bulletin, January 17, 1907.

154. Bulletin, March 28, 1906.

155. Bulletin, April 6, 1906.

Boo Loo¹⁵⁶ in 1907. Headed by Cunning Babe Mason and Little Halycon Martin, the Juvenile Bostonians scored a success with each of their productions. During their first engagement they received such comments from the Bulletin's reviewer regarding The Rajah of Pazala as:

The Star of the company, Babe Mason played with unusual brilliancy in the role of Buttons, the cabin boy, and her solos were encored again and again. The little four-year-old Halycon Martin, brought down the house with ~~her~~ solos, "Little Miss Nobody from Nowhere," and the young Allen McDougal, the only boy in the bunch made a hit in the role of Kate Golding.¹⁵⁷

The following year's engagement was just as successful. Babe Mason was presented with a gold watch on which her name was neatly engraved.¹⁵⁸ Edmontonians objected only once, however, to the Bostonians' performance and on moral grounds rather than artistic. After the production of Dorothy, the Bulletin reported that the major part of the audience would have greatly preferred the omission of some of the verses of the comic songs, which marred the effect of the little comedians' work.¹⁵⁹

The company had its origin in a dramatic school in Seattle. The proprietress, Mrs. Lang, organized her cleverest pupils into a company and began touring. A governess travelled with the actors who twice a year were required to return to their native towns in and around Seattle to write school examinations. Mrs. Lang was quoted to have said proudly:

156. Bulletin, January 10, 1907.

157. Bulletin, April 6, 1906.

158. Bulletin, January 18, 1907.

159. Bulletin, January 13, 1907.

"Not once...has a member of the company failed to pass her examination."¹⁶⁰

As the children grew too tall or became too mature they were dropped from the company and younger children taken on.¹⁶¹

Even more popular in Edmonton than the Juvenile Bostonians was Pollard's Australian Lilliputian Opera Company composed of "fifty cute, cunning and clever juvenile artists."¹⁶² In Edmonton in 1906 and 1908, they performed the operas A Runaway Girl, The Bell of New York, The Geisha, A Gaiety Girl, The Lady Slavey,¹⁶³ The Toymaker and The Mikado.¹⁶⁴ The company excelled both in performance and in staging. Of the former element the Bulletin said regarding A Runaway Girl, that:

It was a performance that so tickled the risibles that every one laughed till they just had to stop. The young performers show marvellous talent for stage acting, and together with the careful training of their wonderfully sweet voices, and the brilliant and pleasing scenery effects, the whole of the performance is one of the best and funniest ever given in the city.¹⁶⁵

In 1908, the Lilliputians returned, the bigger girls having been weeded out of the chorus.¹⁶⁶ They were decked out in brand new costumes and freshly painted scenery. Their production of Floradora was especially impressive this year:

160. Bulletin, January 19, 1907.

161. Bulletin, June 19, 1906.

162. Bulletin, June 19, 1906.

163. Bulletin, June 19, 1906.

164. Bulletin, October 14, 1908.

165. Bulletin, June 26, 1906.

166. Bulletin, October 14, 1908.

The choruses were capitally rendered with the fairy-like dancing and beautiful costumes. In the colored flood lights, the little people formed kaleidoscopic pictures from fairy-land....The changing of scenes in the second act was a notably clever piece of stage work -when the stage, in darkness for a lapse of eight seconds, was transformed from a garden scene to a ballroom with a bevy of daintily frocked little women dancing gaily on to the stage from the wings.¹⁶⁷

January of 1908 brought the Minstrel Maids to the Edmonton Opera House. This company, composed of nineteen young ladies was under the same management as the Juvenile Bostonians and with Halycon Martin, included many of the same performers who had outgrown the original company.¹⁶⁸

167. Bulletin, October 20, 1908.

168. Bulletin, January 18, 1908.

Chapter IV

Dramatic Entertainments

During the later years of the nineteenth century and well into this century, the theatrical touring system known as the Road flourished. It brought to theatres large and small throughout the country many eminent stars from Britain and the United States, even barnstorming in rather primitive conditions in remote communities....It furnished the best from New York and London...to a circuit throughout the wheat country and up the West Coast; Regina, Saskatoon, Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria....The years...preceding the First World War were the heyday of the Road and the end of an era.¹

Major Road Companies

The Clara Mathes Company ushered in the new era of dramatic entertainment in 1900 with a week's engagement in Robertson's Hall. The opening bill was the comedy drama Hazel Kirke. According to the Bulletin, Miss Mathes in the part of the much wronged Hazel played with touching pathos.² She and her company were well received too in their following productions. At this early date in the century, the bill was changed each night, a practice which slowly changed as the population of Edmonton increased. Before long there were large enough audiences to sustain only two plays per week. The Mathes company's other productions this year were Why Smith Stayed Home, Was She to Blame?³ and Herminie, or

1. William Angus, "Theatre," Encyclopedia Canadiana, 1968, X. p. 62.

2. Bulletin, October 12, 1900.

3. Bulletin, October 12, 1900.

The Cross of Gold.⁴

The Mathes Company one year later already reflected the growing population of Edmonton, for in 1902 they had a record run for theatrical companies in the city of nine nights.⁵ The nightly change of bill at Robertson's Hall consisted of Nell Gwynne; an up-to-date New York production of The Young Wife; Ingomar "which was presented in a manner to do all credit to the company";⁶ The Man in Black, a farce which kept the audience laughing throughout the performance;⁷ Romeo and Juliet, a play well represented in the Hall despite lack of stage room; South Africa, The Legion of Honor and Sapho.⁸ Apparently the playing of the company was much better than on their previous engagement and even surpassed greatly the performances usually put on in Edmonton.⁹

The Clara Mathes Company returned in 1903 and played in Robertson's Hall in A Royal Show, Only a Soldier Boy,¹⁰ In the Reign of the Emperor,¹¹ A Race for Congress,¹² Tennessee's Partner,¹³ A Silver Dagger,¹⁴ Nell

4. Bulletin, October 19, 1900.

5. Bulletin, January 10, 1902.

6. Bulletin, January 3, 1902.

7. Bulletin, January 3, 1902.

8. Bulletin, January 3, 1902.

9. Bulletin, January 10, 1902.

10. Bulletin, October 20, 1903.

11. Bulletin, October 21, 1903.

12. Bulletin, October 23, 1903.

13. Bulletin, October 23, 1903.

14. Bulletin, October 24, 1903.

Gwynne,¹⁵ A Royal Spy¹⁶ and The Resurrection. The latter play, taken from the book by Tolstoy which depicted the masses in Russia, impressed the Bulletin critic most.¹⁷

The plays themselves were very well done and packed Robertson's Hall on each occasion. In fact what was to be a one week engagement stretched out to two weeks.¹⁸ The only adverse criticism related to some of the suggestive parts of a number of the songs presented between acts.¹⁹ The company soon, however, wisely omitted anything that was the least objectionable.²⁰

After an absence of two years the Mathes Company returned to Edmonton in 1905 to play a two weeks' engagement in Thistle Rink.²¹ This was their farewell appearance and a comparatively short engagement for they had played three months in Vancouver and six weeks in Calgary.²² In addition to The Silver Dagger²³ and Nell Gwynne²⁴ which they had produced in Edmonton before, the troupe presented The Wife,²⁵ A Daughter of Erin²⁶

15. Bulletin, October 27, 1903.

16. Bulletin, October 27, 1903.

17. Bulletin, October 31, 1903.

18. Bulletin, October 23, 1903.

19. Bulletin, October 21, 1903.

20. Bulletin, October 22, 1903.

21. Bulletin, July 25, 1905.

22. Bulletin, July 31, 1905.

23. Bulletin, July 25, 1905.

24. Bulletin, July 28, 1905.

25. Bulletin, July 25, 1905.

26. Bulletin, July 25, 1905.

North and South,²⁷ A Woman's Victory, A Wife's Mistake,²⁸ The Little Swede,²⁹ The Country Minister,³⁰ Under Two Flags³¹ and moving pictures of Uncle Tom's Cabin.³²

Electricity was to become increasingly important during this decade in the creation of spectacular effects, especially by the Harold Nelson Company. Although the Mathes Company did not excel in such effects in their plays, they were noted in some of the specialties between acts. For example, during her 1902 engagement Miss Mathes performed the Electrical Dance, which the Bulletin termed most beautiful.³³ In 1903, she danced the electric skirt dance in which different colored lights and views were thrown on her during pauses.³⁴

The Clara Hanmer Company played a week's engagement in Robertson's Hall in 1902 and presented Master and Man, The Danites, Brother Against Brother, La Belle Marie, A True Kentuckian³⁵ and Ole Oleson.³⁶ On their return engagement during fair week in 1903 their productions included Brother Against Brother and A Man of Mystery.³⁷ Although the company's

27. Bulletin, July 28, 1905.

28. Bulletin, July 31, 1905.

29. Bulletin, August 2, 1905.

30. Bulletin, August 3, 1905.

31. Bulletin, August 4, 1905.

32. Bulletin, August 5, 1905.

33. Bulletin, January 3, 1902.

34. Bulletin, October 23, 1903.

35. Bulletin, July 18, 1902.

36. Bulletin, July 21, 1902.

37. Bulletin, June 30, 1903.

plays were artistically successful,³⁸ they were plagued by troubles of another sort. On their first appearance they were unable to advertise their coming due to railway washouts so that their audiences were small.³⁹ On the 1903 tour, their entire wardrobe, all stage fittings and their special scenery were destroyed by fire in Wetaskiwin. They managed to wire for new materials and replenished the remainder of their supplies in Edmonton.⁴⁰

In A Stage in Our Past, Murray Edwards wrote that "As far as research can determine, [Harold] Nelson's Canadian Dramatic Company performed in and around Winnipeg only, in the theatres which formed part of Walker's Red River Valley circuit."⁴¹ It is strange that Dr. Edwards should have overlooked Nelson's performances in other cities, especially Edmonton, for he was undoubtedly the most popular and most frequent visitor to the city in the first decade of the twentieth century. In his reminiscences, Bulmer Watt wrote that "The most ambitious productions were those of the Harold Nelson Company....He was a very real theatrical pioneer."⁴²

As the years passed and Harold Nelson kept touring, he increasingly gave in to the popular audience's tastes, and Shakespeare turned up less often in his repertoire. In 1903, however, the more popular plays by

38. Bulletin, July 18, 1902; June 30, 1903; July 2, 1903.

39. Bulletin, July 18, 1902.

40. Bulletin, June 24, 1903.

41. Edwards, A Stage in Our Past, p. 34.

42. Watt, Journal, September 23, 1949.

the bard dominated his programmes. He had three engagements at Robertson's Hall in this year and the Shakespearean plays that he produced and starred in were The Merchant of Venice,⁴³ Romeo and Juliet,⁴⁴ Hamlet,⁴⁵ and The Taming of the Shrew.⁴⁶ His most popular Shakespearean roles were Shylock and Hamlet. Regarding the former role, the Bulletin critic claimed in one review that "Mr. Nelson's many admirers were not disappointed in his portrayal of the fiercest passions of the human heart. Hate, greed and unjust revenge were all pictured in their worst and fiercest forms."⁴⁷ When he repeated the role three years later,

he surpassed his former presentation in a really remarkable portrayal of the heartless old miser. The hatred which was the soul's breath of the old villain was reflected in every lineament and gesture he spoke through every intonation from the whispering hypocrisy with which he beguiled Antonio into the...fiendish shriek with which he rushed at his suppressed victim in the courtroom.⁴⁸

In 1908 the critic typified Nelson's portrayals of Shylock when he said that his performances were very similar to those of Edwin Booth, in that he played him as a man of flesh and blood. This interpretation was opposed to fifty years before Irving, Macklin and Booth saw a depth of character in Shylock, when he was played strictly for low comedy.⁴⁹

43. Bulletin, March 12, 1903.

44. Bulletin, March 13, 1903.

45. Bulletin, March 14, 1903.

46. Bulletin, December 28, 1903.

47. Bulletin, March 12, 1903.

48. Bulletin, October 13, 1906.

49. Bulletin, August 25, 1908.

The same observations were made regarding his Hamlet: "He looked and spoke the part to the life."⁵⁰ "The audience seemed to forget that they were listening to a play, so realistic it seemed."⁵¹ This new realism had its limitation, however, for when he played Romeo, the Bulletin said "he looked a good deal...more manly than Romeo was meant to be....It is on the boy's failings, not the man's strength, that the play hinges."⁵²

But Harold Nelson really made his mark in the West not for his Shakespearean roles but for his performances in Richelieu and Quo Vadis. The lead in Bulwer Lytton's play he performed more than any other single role in Edmonton. The first time it was put on the boards, wrote the Bulletin, "looked at from a strictly Edmonton point of view...was an event in the history of the town...marking its advance to city standing."⁵³ Mr. Nelson said that he thought that nearly every man, woman and child in Edmonton had seen him in the part.⁵⁴ Reviewing the 1903 portrayal, the Bulletin's critic said:

Richelieu is a play that can only be presented by artists and is one of the best plays that artists present. It calls for great powers of interpretation, especially so in the leading character....The unanimous opinion of last night's audience was that they had never seen this splendid play more splendidly presented.

50. Bulletin, March 10, 1903.

51. Bulletin, December 31, 1903.

52. Bulletin, March 13, 1903.

53. Bulletin, March 10, 1903.

54. Bulletin, August 30, 1908.

Notwithstanding the excellent support which has been given the leading character Mr. Nelson, as Cardinal Richelieu, towers above the other characters of the play. The king becomes a schoolboy and the others are overshadowed, and rightly; even so did Richelieu tower above the men of his day.⁵⁵

The other plays in the Nelson Company's repertoire that caused more than the usual amount of excitement in Edmonton were Goethe's Faust and the religious play The Holy City. Reviewing Nelson's performance in the former play the Bulletin critic said that "The personification of the spirit of all evil, presented by Mr. Nelson as Mephisto, was startling, striking and conveyed an idea of uncanny realism."⁵⁶ The latter play was popular because of its subject matter, not usually treated on the stage at this time and because of the spectacle it encompassed.

To Harold Nelson too, goes the honor of performing the first plays in Edmonton written by George Bernard Shaw. Thus in 1908, Edmonton had the opportunity "not often enjoyed even in the large cities of Eastern Canada, of studying the plays by this most original and probably greatest of living English playwrights."⁵⁷ Mr. Nelson presented Candida,⁵⁸ and Arms and the Man.⁵⁹ In "Edmonton's cosmopolitan society, which was very largely represented"⁶⁰ when the latter play was acted, Shaw and

55. Bulletin, December 29, 1903.

56. Bulletin, November 9, 1904.

57. Bulletin, August 7, 1908.

58. Bulletin, August 13, 1908.

59. Bulletin, September 3, 1908.

60. Bulletin, September 5, 1908.

Nelson managed to "provoke afresh the discussion of the right or wrong of war, the ultimate disposition of the world's armies, and the effect of the military atmosphere upon communities and individuals."⁶¹

Even the plays of lesser quality acted for the people in Edmonton by the Harold Nelson Company were above the general rank of plays produced by most other troupes. In 1903 Mr. Nelson presented at Robertson's Hall Don Caesar de Bazan,⁶² Under Two Flags,⁶³ Mistress Nell⁶⁴ and A Set of Turquoise.⁶⁵

The years 1904 and 1905 saw the Nelsons produce Heart and Sword,⁶⁶ Paul Kauvar,⁶⁷ Prince Otto⁶⁸ and Francesca da Rimini.⁶⁹

A veritable flood of Victorian melodrama was produced by Harold Nelson in 1906 with A Soldier of Fortune,⁷⁰ Facing the Music,⁷¹ The Virginian,⁷² David Garrick's Love,⁷³ Granstark,⁷⁴ The Prisoner of

61. Bulletin, September 3, 1908.

62. Bulletin, March 11, 1903.

63. Bulletin, March 14, 1903.

64. Bulletin, March 14, 1903.

65. Bulletin, December 28, 1903.

66. Bulletin, October 27, 1904.

67. Bulletin, April 18, 1905.

68. Bulletin, November 27, 1905.

69. Bulletin, November 28, 1905.

70. Bulletin, October 9, 1906.

71. Bulletin, October 10, 1906.

72. Bulletin, October 12, 1906.

73. Bulletin, October 11, 1906.

74. Bulletin, October 6, 1906.

Zenda⁷⁵ and Arizona.⁷⁶

The years 1907 and 1908 saw productions at the Edmonton Opera House of The Egyptian of Pompeii,⁷⁷ A Western Girl,⁷⁸ The Slave and the Princess,⁷⁹ The Private Secretary⁸⁰ and The Walls of Jericho.⁸¹

The staging of Harold Nelson's productions became more lavish and spectacular as the decade progressed. In his production of Romeo and Juliet in 1903, the Bulletin critic remarked that "The costumes were correct and tasteful and those of the leading people were rich as well."⁸² While other productions such as Quo Vadis in the same year were described as most elaborate in respect to scenery, costuming, electrical effects,⁸³ the shows in the later years seemed to hinge on spectacle a great deal more.

This concentration on the physical staging became pronounced when the Nelson Company was placed under the sole management of C. P. Walker, a proprietor of several Canadian and American theatres, including the historic Walker Theatre in Winnipeg. When the arrangement was announced in 1903, Mr. Walker reported that he planned to equip Harold Nelson with

75. Bulletin, December 26, 1906.

76. Bulletin, December 29, 1906.

77. Bulletin, November 26, 1906.

78. Bulletin, November 28, 1907.

79. Bulletin, August 4, 1908.

80. Bulletin, August 14, 1908.

81. Bulletin, September 9, 1908.

82. Bulletin, March 13, 1903.

83. Bulletin, December 15, 1903.

productions superior to any that had been seen in the west.⁸⁴ In 1904, the Bulletin reported that for the play Heart and Sword, Walker had furnished his star with scenery specially painted by a New York artist from the original designs. The period and locale of the play afforded ample opportunities for elaborate costuming, and these had been taken full advantage of, without regard to expense.⁸⁵

The greatest display came in 1907 with The Egyptian of Pompeii when the curtain descended upon the spectacle of Vesuvius in eruption, belching forth molten lava and ashes.⁸⁶ The Holy City was produced the following year with a special carload of scenery and effects from Chicago.⁸⁷ Particularly impressive were Christ's crucifixion and transformation.⁸⁸

After years of catering to and whetting the audience's taste for spectacle, Harold Nelson attempted to revive Shakespeare in the fall of 1908, but, alas, the audiences were lamentably small.⁸⁹ He regretted that Shakespeare had lost his hold on audiences and declared:

...five or seven years ago Edmonton loved Shakespeare. Now Shakespeare palls! Shakespeare has passed even temporarily out of life's interests -gone where the spinning wheels are gone, and the packhorses, and the slow wagons, and the pedlars

84. Bulletin, May 6, 1903.

85. Bulletin, October 27, 1904.

86. Bulletin, November 28, 1907.

87. Bulletin, August 28, 1908.

88. Bulletin, September 18, 1908.

89. Bulletin, September 10, 1908.

who brought bargains to the door on sunny afternoons.⁹⁰

But the fault was as much his as the audience's. Nevertheless, the Bulletin blamed the demise of the classics on the people of Edmonton:

...the big public is like a naughty child that won't have what is good for it, but what amuses it. It must have its spinning top, and grow giddy watching the thing's gyrations: it must have its electric locomotion to whirl it somewhere -anywhere, so long as the dear public is not asked to think.

Thinking would surely set up a mental indigestion, and must be avoided.⁹¹

The National Stock Company came to Edmonton in 1903 and held the boards in Robertson's Hall with The Three Muskateers,⁹² My Partner Jack,⁹³ The Resurrection,⁹⁴ David Garrick,⁹⁵ A Woman's Heart,⁹⁶ The Prisoner of Zenda⁹⁷ and The Sins of the Father.⁹⁸

David Garrick was considered to be the best play the company put on and "was far in advance of the usual style of play seen in Edmonton."⁹⁹ The National Stock Company engaged in a curious theatrical tradition

90. Bulletin, September 10, 1908.

91. Bulletin, September 10, 1908.

92. Bulletin, December 2, 1903.

93. Bulletin, December 2, 1903.

94. Bulletin, December 3, 1903.

95. Bulletin, December 4, 1903.

96. Bulletin, December 7, 1903.

97. Bulletin, December 8, 1903.

98. Bulletin, December 9, 1903.

99. Bulletin, December 4, 1903.

[as did other companies later] when The Sins of the Father was the bill: it was hockey night and the players were present in full force. Miss Cornyn, one of the principals, wore the Edmonton hockey colors during the evening!¹⁰⁰

Second in fame only to the Harold Nelson Company in Edmonton was the Tom Marks Company. This troupe was only one branch, of course, of the many Marks' troupes, each headed by a different member of the family. The three major ones were led by the brothers Bob, Ernie and Tom. "In scheme, the companies dove-tailed their tours, covering the country in such a fashion that in any one town at any one time, the citizens were either welcoming or waving goodbye to a Marks Brothers production."¹⁰¹ The Bulletin critic, too, realized

Marks is like the good old summer time, he gets around once a year, no matter what else happens. And most of the boys and girls who are now men and women would go to see their old friend Tom if he didn't do anything but a monologue. It matters little what part of Canada you come from whether it is Cape Breton... or the Klondike, you have surely met Tom Marks before, and that is one of the reasons why he always gets a house.¹⁰²

This identification of the Marks' companies with the small town people of Canada¹⁰³ discernible in the above statement was verified

100. Bulletin, December 9, 1903.

101. Edwards, A Stage in Our Past, p. 45.

102. Bulletin, January 2, 1907.

103. The Marks Brothers were all originally farm boys from Christie Lake, Ontario, and returned there when they retired.

by Kitty Marks, the leading lady and wife of Ernie Marks. She wrote that the Marks Brothers

knew they were small-timers, so they stuck to the small-time circuits. None of the brothers attempted to play Montreal or Toronto. They passed up Winnipeg and Vancouver when those cities began to grow.

They played briefly and rarely, in Hamilton and Ottawa. They were wise enough to leave such places to the big English and American road companies, and stay where they were sure of a welcome.¹⁰⁴

Bulmer Watt recalled an incident that occurred in a small Canadian town when it was visited by Wilson Barrett, the eminent English tragedian:

At his hotel he was greeted by an old Irishman...with 'And do you know Tom Marks?' 'No, I'm afraid I don't,' was the lofty reply. 'Well then,' Tim rejoined, 'you must be a pretty poor actor.'¹⁰⁵

More important, however, for the Marks Brothers' continuing success than this neighbour quality, was their gift for play acting and production which got them by the audiences of their day. In addition to this they all had keen business senses.¹⁰⁶ Murray Edwards wrote, for example, that

The people respected the church, so the entire troupe was ordered to church at least once every Sunday. In towns where the denominations were more evenly divided, they were

104. Kitty Marks and Frank Croft, "My Life With the Original Marks Brothers," Macleans, 71 [June 21, 1958], p. 58.

105. Watts, Journal, September 23, 1949.

106. Marks, "The Original Marks Brothers," p. 58.

expected to go two and even three times, each time to a different church. The Marks Brothers wisely followed the policy that the customer was always right.¹⁰⁷

"Virtue and villainy were the qualities which stood out in most plays of the period like the huge masks of a Mardi Gras parade, caricatured and enlarged beyond resemblance to anything real....The Marks' companies played it not only heavy, but nice and loud. The people loved it, and them."¹⁰⁸

As so they did for the Bulletin reviewer agreed that Tom Marks "always put on a good, fast mello-drama (sic) with plenty of situations and a laugh thrown in whenever necessary."¹⁰⁹ The Marks Brothers brought the latest London and New York plays, often pirated and presented under false titles to conceal the fact.¹¹⁰ Tom Marks arrived in Edmonton in December of 1904. The company's first play, Jerry and the Tramp, played to a crowded house in Robertson's Hall.

According to the Bulletin, the play was

...amusing and highly entertaining. The different characters played their parts splendidly, and the plot worked out with an ease and finish that delighted the audience....Tom Marks, as Jerry the tramp, took a most difficult part, but his clever acting, added to a certainly very grotesque make-up, left little to be desired.¹¹¹

Tom Marks' company returned again in 1906-07 and 1908. Tom

107. Edwards, A Stage in Our Past, p. 45.

108. Marks, "The Original Marks Brothers," p. 59.

109. Bulletin, January 2, 1907.

110. Marks, "The Original Marks Brothers," p. 16.

111. Bulletin, December 14, 1904.

specialized in plays of an Irish character and these formed a large part of his bills in Edmonton. In 1904 he produced The Irish Boarder¹¹² and The Irish Immigrant.¹¹³ The Irish plays during the 1906-07 engagement at the Opera House included The Irish Detective¹¹⁴ and Shamus O'Brien.¹¹⁵ In 1908 he produced The Rose of Kerry,¹¹⁶ Major O'Hara, The Irish Dragoon and Dublin Dan.¹¹⁷

The other melodramas put on by the Tom Marks troupe in Edmonton included The Dukes's Daughter,¹¹⁸ A Soldier of France, The Defaulter, The Little Minister,¹¹⁹ The Fatal Wedding,¹²⁰ The Great Northwest, The Prodigal Son,¹²¹ A Wife's Devotion, The Jailbird and The Hypocrite.¹²²

The Marks' troupes were renowned for their specialties, and Tom's company was no exception. Kitty Marks reminisced that "A Marks Brothers production was busier than a three-ring circus."¹²³ The Bulletin noted:

A big feature of the Marks Stock company's shows are

112. Bulletin, December 14, 1904.

113. Bulletin, December 16, 1904.

114. Bulletin, January 2, 1907.

115. Bulletin, January 2, 1907.

116. Bulletin, November 25, 1908.

117. Bulletin, November 28, 1908.

118. Bulletin, December 15, 1904.

119. Bulletin, December 16, 1904.

120. Bulletin, December 28, 1906.

121. Bulletin, January 2, 1908.

122. Bulletin, January 5, 1908.

123. Marks, "The Original Marks Brothers," p. 61.

the specialties. The specialties are put on immediately after the curtain is rung down on the play and a continuous programme is given.¹²⁴

Every Marks troupe offered vaudeville between the acts also. Joe Marks, for instance, put on a trick cyclist between acts one and two. Between the acts of The Orphan, Ernie Marks showed the moving pictures of The Great Train Robbery.¹²⁵

Kitty Marks' article also gives a good picture of the daily existence of a road company in the west during the early years of the century: "It was as I remember it a hard life," she wrote.

On more than one winter's night the male members of the company took turns tending the stoves all night in rooming houses and hotels to keep warm....It was a life of catching early trains, and often rehearsing in the coaches while the children...played in the aisles or slept. Then we would be decanted on a station platform where our advance agent awaited us, ready to lead us to the hotel or boarding house he had picked out. Usually there was a hasty lunch and then a matinee performance. Right after supper it was back to the theatre or town hall to prepare for the evening show. Then back to the lodgings to study new plays or listen to our stage director's ideas for improving current ones, until late at night.¹²⁶

She remembered

124. Bulletin, December 14, 1904.

125. Marks, "The Original Marks Brothers," p. 61.

126. Ibid, pp. 56-57.

Playing to farmers who had hitched up in mid-afternoon to make their way over miles of treacherous roads just in time for the evening show, to school children who had been given a special half holiday to see a matinee, or to townsfolk arrayed in rustling crinoline and biting starch for a night at the 'opry house,' [which] made you feel you were fulfilling a mission rather than merely doing a job of work.¹²⁷

Wherever they played, "The sight of a Marks Troupe alighting from a train anywhere in the country sent a quiver of excitement through the station loungers equalled only by the excitement of a circus parade."¹²⁸

Murray Edwards wrote:

Of the hundreds of touring companies travelling Canada... few were Canadian. Both the lack of interest on the part of Canadians in native talent and the fact that local groups were unable to compete financially with the more established English and American companies accounts for this. Touring a play was after all, a highly competitive business.¹²⁹

Perhaps Mr. Edwards is a little harsh on the Canadian audiences. The reception afforded Harold Nelson and the various Marks Companies would indicate that Canadians simply respected worth wherever they found it and enjoyed and rewarded what was entertaining whatever the source.

127. Marks, "The Original Marks Brothers," p. 60

128. Ibid., p. 59.

129. Edwards, A Stage in Our Past, p. 39.

The success of the Summers Stock Company during their Edmonton engagements¹³⁰ further indicated that the national origin of a troupe did not seem important.¹³¹ A Bulletin article of 1907 reported:

The enormous business done by George H. Summers and his big stock company all along the line from Toronto to the coast is but a just tribute to the best organization of its kind in existence. Equipped with every requisite to success, it is giving its patrons more for the money than was ever attempted by any similar attraction, and the management is reaping its reward for keeping faith with the public.¹³²

The Summers Stock Company made their first appearance in Edmonton in 1904 at which time they presented The Gambler's Wife,¹³³ Why Women Divorce¹³⁴ and Was She Guilty?¹³⁵ In 1907 they returned with seventeen people, five big vaudeville features and a car load of scenery and effects and produced at the Opera House, Mrs. Temple's Telegram,¹³⁶ Because She Loved Him So, Zira,¹³⁷ The Plunger, The Little

130. The Summers Stock Company had established a permanent home in Hamilton, Ontario.
131. In fact, as far as Harold Nelson was concerned, his Canadian identity seemed to contribute a great deal to his success during this intensely nationalistic period in Canada's history.
132. Bulletin, April 3, 1907.
133. Bulletin, December 27, 1904.
134. Bulletin, December 28, 1904.
135. Bulletin, December 29, 1904.
136. Bulletin, April 3, 1907.
137. Bulletin, April 6, 1907.

Minister, Lend Me Your Wife, The Black Flag, Niobe,¹³⁸ For Her Baby's
Sake, The Parish Priest,¹³⁹ Carmen, My Old Kentucky Home,¹⁴⁰ Dora Thorne
 and A Prince of Tatters.¹⁴¹

Another two week engagement in 1908 saw new plays by the company
 including Thorns and Orange Blossoms,¹⁴² The Brixton Burglary,¹⁴³
Her Lord and Master, The Silver King,¹⁴⁴ Marrying Off Kitty, Way Down
East,¹⁴⁵ Brown's in Town,¹⁴⁶ The Burglar, Rip Van Winkle, The Lion and
the Mouse¹⁴⁷ and Hazel Kirke.¹⁴⁸

Over the years the company was well received both by audiences
 and critics in Edmonton. The reviewer of the Bulletin in 1908 wrote
 that "Mr. Summers always brings along with him [a good cast] to relieve
 the western tedium of constantly reappearing barnstormers and inserts
 a little spice and real art when we are most in need of it."¹⁴⁹ In
 another article in the same issue he added:

...to say the company is far superior to the average

138. Bulletin, April 8, 1907.

139. Bulletin, April 12, 1907.

140. Bulletin, April 17, 1907.

141. Bulletin, April 17, 1907.

142. Bulletin, January 2, 1908.

143. Bulletin, January 7, 1908.

144. Bulletin, January 9, 1908.

145. Bulletin, January 9, 1908.

146. Bulletin, January 14, 1908.

147. Bulletin, January 15, 1908.

148. Bulletin, January 17, 1908.

149. Bulletin, January 7, 1908.

stock company hardly does it justice....The company is strong throughout and evenly balanced, even the smallest part being in the hands of a capable actor. The stage settings are beautiful and even elaborate and the strictest attention is paid to details.¹⁵⁰

The Pringle Stock Company was the next major group to arrive in Edmonton. Their plays, like those of the Marks Company and even the Summers Company, were the more flagrant types of melodramas, seldom reaching the heights of the Harold Nelson troupe. In 1906 they acted in The Convict's Daughter,¹⁵¹ A Bashful Lover, A Foxy Tramp,¹⁵² Trapped by a Woman,¹⁵³ East Lynne,¹⁵⁴ What Happened to Felix? Uncle Josh, Rip Van Winkle, and Frenzied Finance.¹⁵⁵ Plays new to their repertoire that they put on the boards at the Opera House in 1907 included Reaping the Harvest,¹⁵⁶ For Love and Honor,¹⁵⁷ To Die at Dawn,¹⁵⁸ Young Mrs. Winthrop,¹⁵⁹ An Unequal Match,¹⁶⁰ The Pony

150. Bulletin, January 7, 1908.

151. Bulletin, October 12, 1906.

152. Bulletin, October 15, 1906.

153. Bulletin, October 23, 1906.

154. Bulletin, October 26, 1906.

155. Bulletin, October 30, 1906.

156. Bulletin, May 25, 1907.

157. Bulletin, May 29, 1907.

158. Bulletin, June 1, 1907.

159. Bulletin, June 3, 1907.

160. Bulletin, June 7, 1907.

Express,¹⁶¹ The Western Girl,¹⁶² Trapped by Treachery,¹⁶³ The Diamond Robbery,¹⁶⁴ Across the Sea and Little Lord Fauntleroy.¹⁶⁵ The latter play made a professional actor out of another Edmontonian, Little Hazel Winn was engaged by the Pringle Company after their 1906 engagement in Edmonton and played the title role in Little Lord Fauntleroy. Apparently Miss Winn was accorded the most favorable criticisms by both press and public in the largest cities on the coast.¹⁶⁶

Like the Summers Company the Pringles were also praised for their ensemble acting,¹⁶⁷ their efficiency and their lavish staging.¹⁶⁸

In 1907 there was a great increase in the number of road companies that visited Edmonton. But the greatest theatrical event of the year was the visit by Minnie Maddern Fiske to the Thistle Rink Theatre. Backed by the Manhattan Theatre Company, Mrs. Fiske acted in the season's greatest success in New York City, The New York Idea. Included in the cast were John Mason and George Arliss, who afterwards attained front rank in the theatrical world. Both Mason and Arliss returned to Edmonton in later years as stars in As A Man Thinks in 1914 and Old

161. Bulletin, June 10, 1907.

162. Bulletin, June 11, 1907.

163. Bulletin, June 12, 1907.

164. Bulletin, June 13, 1907.

165. Bulletin, June 14, 1907.

166. Bulletin, May 31, 1907.

167. Bulletin, October 15, 1906.

168. Bulletin, October 16, 1906.

English in 1926, respectively.¹⁶⁹

The New York Idea was Langdon Mitchell's greatest success and as soon as the impending arrival of Mrs. Fiske and the company was announced in Edmonton, the tension began to mount. As is usual in such situations, rumors of various sorts abounded. One, for example, was that the price of admission to see Mrs. Fiske would be five dollars. The Bulletin took it upon itself to dispel that impression and claimed that although the expense of the undertaking would justify such action, the highest priced seats would be but three dollars.¹⁷⁰ As June, 1907 drew to a close and the day of the play came nearer, the excitement grew. When the sale of seats opened at Archibald's Drug Store¹⁷¹ a long line was waiting, and there was no cessation in the demand throughout the first day.¹⁷² A large number of mail orders had already been received.¹⁷³

Recurring articles in the Bulletin lavished praise on Mrs. Fiske and various members of her company: "Mr. Mason is by general consent the best American leading actor of roles requiring sincerity, polish and distinction."¹⁷⁴ And, "Her present support, the Manhattan Company is beyond question the representative dramatic organization on the

169. Watt, Journal, September 23, 1949.

170. Bulletin, May 17, 1907.

171. Archibald's Drug Store was the agency that sold seats for Robertson's Hall in its last days, and for the Edmonton Opera House and Thistle Rink Theatre when these buildings were important playhouses.

172. Bulletin, June 22, 1907.

173. Bulletin, June 22, 1907.

174. Bulletin, June 27, 1907.

American Stage."¹⁷⁵ Two days before the performance it was finally concluded that this was the most important dramatic event in the history of the west.¹⁷⁶ Bulmer Watt agreed forty-two years later that Mrs. Fiske's was "The first company of an outstanding character that Edmon-
ton saw...."¹⁷⁷

Finally, the great day arrived. It was broad daylight when the audience assembled in the Rink, and also when it emerged.¹⁷⁸ Things had got off to a bad start for there was a long delay in getting the scenery across the river valley from Strathcona. As a result the curtain did not go up until nearly midnight.¹⁷⁹ The Bulletin reported that over one thousand people waited with monumental patience through an unexplained delay that ran on and on. This rather shabby treatment on the part of the management was not ingratiating to the auditors, who as a result, looked on at the somewhat uninteresting first act in a decidedly unenthusiastic manner.¹⁸⁰ Perhaps it was this annoyance that prompted the Bulletin reviewer to say of The New York Idea that it failed "as an adequate medium for [Mrs. Fiske's] undoubted abilities as an actress," and that the "long delay...did not tend to make the audience less critical of the light pleasantries...clever comedy and hinted pathos...."¹⁸¹ After several weeks interval when the

175. Bulletin, June 27, 1907.

176. Bulletin, July 2, 1907.

177. Watts, Journal, September 23, 1949.

178. Ibid.

179. Ibid.

180. Bulletin, July 4, 1907.

181. Bulletin, July 4, 1907.

annoyance had a chance to wear off, an article recalled "what a treat it was to look upon that consummate little actress such leagues removed in her own refined personality, in her training and aims from the crude young people who frequently visit our town with melodramatic companies."¹⁸² Years later, Bulmer Watt recalled: "The performance was a most finished one in all respects."¹⁸³

Classed among the 'top notchers' of the decade was Angel's Comedians who played Edmonton in 1907 and 1908. Numbering fifteen actors and carrying a carload of scenery,¹⁸⁴ the company stayed two weeks the first year and presented Hearts of the Blue Ridge,¹⁸⁵ Dear Old Maryland, The Devil's Web, Wedded But No Wife, New Mown Hay,¹⁸⁶ The Handicap, Why Men Leave Home, The Heart of the Storm and On the Swanee River.¹⁸⁷

Angel's Comedians relied greatly on spectacle to lure their audience. This became especially evident during their second engagement in 1908. In reviews of their plays the Bulletin critic admired their complete scenic productions such as in The Counterfeiter¹⁸⁸ or in Wedded But No Wife.¹⁸⁹ The Chorus Lady, for example, included several big novelties, one in particular being a complete reproduction

182. Bulletin, August 17, 1907.

183. Watt, Journal, September 23, 1949.

184. Bulletin, June 17, 1907.

185. Bulletin, June 12, 1907.

186. Bulletin, June 20, 1907.

187. Bulletin, June 24, 1907.

188. Bulletin, January 29, 1908.

189. Bulletin, February 1, 1908.

of the dressing room where chorus girls made up.¹⁹⁰ In A Royal Prisoner, the outstanding features of the performance were the handsome gowns of the company and the rich stage settings.¹⁹¹

The Comedians were not unique in their use of spectacle, but they certainly excelled in their use of advertising gimmicks. The advertisement for Wedded But No Wife stated that immediately after the performance, a holder of the lucky coupon would be presented with a real live baby. The advertisement created a furor in certain circles for a week¹⁹² which involved the police chief and mayor.¹⁹³ The manager of the company played on this and called at the Bulletin office to regret that so many should take his action so unkindly, and that he would be disappointed should the winner of the baby be one undesirable to the audience.¹⁹⁴ If such were the case, it was to be given to one of the many people who were anxious to adopt it.¹⁹⁵ Later the paper reported that the baby which for a week called forth the sympathy of certain humane and benevolent organizations in the city proved to be a little white pig!¹⁹⁶

At another performance, Angel's manager, [whose name, ironically, was Mr. Nutt], announced that he would run an amateur contest. Among the special features would be a lady who claimed to be of such promin-

190. Bulletin, February 9, 1908.

191. Bulletin, February 10, 1908.

192. Bulletin, February 1, 1908.

193. Bulletin, February 3, 1908.

194. Bulletin, February 1, 1908.

195. Bulletin, February 1, 1908.

196. Bulletin, February 3, 1908.

ence in Edmonton that she would not care to be recognized by her friends, and made the request to sing with a veil over her face.¹⁹⁷

The Angel's Comedians other productions during this second bizarre engagement included, Women Against an Empire,¹⁹⁸ Woman Against Woman,¹⁹⁹ For Home and Honor,²⁰⁰ Jim Bludso,²⁰¹ Across the Desert,²⁰² The Wizard of Wall Street and Deadwood Dick.²⁰³

It was during 1907 and especially 1908 that Edmonton was now large enough to support repeat performances of plays. This expanded theatrical patronage was demonstrated by the George B. Howard Company which undertook a three week engagement in Edmonton, changing the bill only three times per week.²⁰⁴ For each performance they played to packed houses at the Edmonton Opera House.²⁰⁵ Their productions included Christopher, Jr.,²⁰⁶ Other People's Money,²⁰⁷ The Man from Mexico, Friends,²⁰⁸

197. Bulletin, February 13, 1908.

198. Bulletin, January 22, 1908.

199. Bulletin, January 30, 1908.

200. Bulletin, February 3, 1908.

201. Bulletin, February 4, 1908.

202. Bulletin, February 7, 1908.

203. Bulletin, February 13, 1908.

204. Bulletin, September 9, 1907.

205. Bulletin, September 14, 1907.

206. Bulletin, September 9, 1907.

207. Bulletin, September 11, 1907.

208. Bulletin, September 14, 1907.

The Innocent Sinner,²⁰⁹ The Nominee, Mrs. Winthrop,²¹⁰ Hello Bill,
A Gold Mine, The Arabian Nights, Their Last Game, Wanted a Family,²¹¹
Deep as the Sea and Charlie's Aunt.²¹²

The growing indulgence in staging extravagance was exhibited by the McAuliffe Stock Company that graced the boards of The Edmonton Opera House in 1907. As the Bulletin so aptly put it: "The success of this organization in the melodramatic field during the past few years has encouraged the management to outdo their previous efforts...."²¹³ Referring to The Mining King, McAuliffe's opening bill, the paper said that each of the ten scenes would be given in their entirety with all special scenery, electrical and mechanical effects.²¹⁴ No local settings were used during the engagement, and each of the plays produced in Edmonton was mounted the same as when presented by the original company. The presentations included: Adrift,²¹⁵ The Daughter of the People,
The Belle of Richmond, The Fairies,²¹⁶ The Confessions of a Wife,²¹⁷

 209. Bulletin, September 21, 1907.

210. Bulletin, September 21, 1907.

211. Bulletin, September 24, 1907.

212. Bulletin, September 24, 1907.

213. Bulletin, September 26, 1907.

214. Bulletin, September 26, 1907.

215. Bulletin, September 26, 1907.

216. Bulletin, October 8, 1907.

217. Bulletin, October 8, 1907.

Tennessee's Partner, Pitfalls of New York²¹⁸ and Niobe.²¹⁹ The plot of Niobe involved the resuscitation of the Queen of Thebes by the application of an electric current.²²⁰ Electricity was playing an increasingly important role in the creation of spectacle.

"One of the best theatrical companies on the road in the west"²²¹ came to Edmonton for a two week engagement in the fall of 1907. The Fanning-Howard Company of fifteen people headed by Frank D. Fanning and Miss Words Howard, both known throughout the United States as stars of exceptional ability,²²² was in a measure unique. It possessed the record of making the longest jump in theatrical annals of two thousand six hundred miles from Seattle to Nome. The company, according to the Bulletin, was the only first class organization to play the Arctic Circle.²²³ Not as much notice was given to spectacle in the Fanning-Howard productions except for the play Labor Versus Capital, in which the second act set in the offices of a big dynamo factory revealed the machines and forges in the background with the machinists at work.²²⁴ The other of the company's productions at the Opera House included: Sappho, The Lost Paradise, The Man from Mexico, Sherlock Holmes,

218. Bulletin, October 10, 1907.

219. Bulletin, October 8, 1907.

220. Bulletin, October 12, 1907.

221. Bulletin, November 25, 1907.

222. Bulletin, November 25, 1907.

223. Bulletin, December 4, 1907.

224. Bulletin, December 10, 1907.

The Princess of Patches, In Missouri, Human Hearts,²²⁵ The Virginian,²²⁶
The Private Secretary,²²⁷ My Friend from India, Faust, The Flag of
Truce,²²⁸ and David Garrick.²²⁹ Critics were quick to jump on a group
that did not maintain the standard of spectacle to which audiences even
in the Northwest had become accustomed. Edmontonians were dissatisfied
with the Fanning-Howard production of David Garrick, not because it was
imperfectly interpreted, but because it did not attain the standard
which the company had raised for itself regarding scenic display.²³⁰

The spectacle-oriented audience criticized the Dominion Stock
Company because they did not have a full orchestra in the pit. "The
place of the orchestra was taken by a pianist who probably did her
best,"²³¹ wrote the Bulletin's critic. However, the company managed to
mount the "greatest of all melodramas"²³² to the liking of the Edmonton-
ians. The scenic effects of The Orphans were particularly handsome,
representing as they did street scenes and interiors in Paris in the
sixteenth century.²³³ The Dominion Stock Company also produced My
Nephew's Wife, Raffles, The Amateur Cracksman, Traps and A Lesson

225. Bulletin, November 25, 1907.

226. Bulletin, December 7, 1907.

227. Bulletin, December 9, 1907.

228. Bulletin, December 18, 1907.

229. Bulletin, December 17, 1907.

230. Bulletin, December 17, 1907.

231. Bulletin, December 26, 1907.

232. Bulletin, December 17, 1907.

233. Bulletin, December 24, 1907.

in Whist.²³⁴

The year 1908 brought Edmonton its first two resident professional stock companies.²³⁵ The Jeanne Russell Stock Company was the most important as the longest running, and operated at the Dominion Theatre. The Allen Stock Company performed simultaneously, at first from the Edmonton Opera House, then also from the Dominion.

Jeanne Russell's Stock Company began its engagement at Brandon's Dominion Theatre in June, 1908 in Ouida's Moths.²³⁶ This play was followed in the same month by Red Cross Nurse, Dora Thorne, The Private Secretary,²³⁷ An American Girl²³⁸ and Friends.²³⁹ The company was already popular with Edmontonians, perhaps because of the lower admission prices it charged.²⁴⁰ As early as June, the Dominion advertised itself as "The theatre that turns away hundreds at each performance,"²⁴¹ and Jeanne Russell as "Edmonton's popular actress."²⁴² Miss Russell was to maintain her popularity with Edmonton's critics and audiences well into the second decade of the century.

In July, Miss Russell began the practice of importing stars to en-

234. Bulletin, December 23, 1907.

235. Harold Nelson's was such a company except that his stays in Edmonton were not as long as those companies in 1908.

236. Bulletin, June 9, 1908.

237. Bulletin, June 9, 1908.

238. Bulletin, June 15, 1908.

239. Bulletin, June 19, 1908.

240. Bulletin, July 13, 1908.

241. Bulletin, June 29, 1908.

242. Bulletin, June 15, 1908.

hance her productions. She introduced Frederick Clarke to play the part of David Garrick in the play of the same name.²⁴³ He also took part in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, given for the first time in the city,²⁴⁴ and in The Senator's Daughter.²⁴⁵ This month the Russell Company also produced The Galley Slave,²⁴⁶ Emanuella²⁴⁷ and Caprice.²⁴⁸

In August, Frederick Clarke continued his support in such plays as Forgiven and Faust.²⁴⁹ Miss Russell introduced four other stars this month in the persons of Gertrude Stone, "a character actress of international reputation";²⁵⁰ Miss Bessie Cooney, "said to be the prettiest ingenue on the American stage";²⁵¹ Miss Kittie Dale, a singer from London, who performed between acts; and Tomozi Wada, the first Japanese actor ever seen in Edmonton.²⁵² Gertrude Stone and Bessie Cooney performed in The Young Mrs. Winthrop²⁵³ and Tomozi Wada in Paid in Full, for which he got a great deal of applause for his small part.²⁵⁴ Other

243. Bulletin, July 11, 1908.

244. Bulletin, July 23, 1908.

245. Bulletin, July 24, 1908.

246. Bulletin, July 5, 1908.

247. Bulletin, July 17, 1908.

248. Bulletin, July 28, 1908.

249. Bulletin, August 14, 1908.

250. Bulletin, August 1, 1908.

251. Bulletin, August 1, 1908.

252. Bulletin, August 30, 1908.

253. Bulletin, August 1, 1908.

254. Bulletin, August 30, 1908.

Russell productions during the month of August included The Private Secretary,²⁵⁵ Christopher, Jr.,²⁵⁶ Polly Primrose and A Night Off.²⁵⁷

Regarding the production of Faust at the Dominion, the Bulletin reported that it was

...probably the most ambitious and expensive ever placed on the stage of a popular priced house in this city. The scenery was all new, attractive, appropriate and elaborately beautiful, and it was a revelation to many that such a production could be placed on so small a stage. The amount of scenery to handle made the waits between acts somewhat tedious, but when the curtain rose, disclosing the effects, such as the church scene, and the awe-inspiring picture of the lost souls inferno, the delays were forgotten.²⁵⁸

Spectacle began to play an increasingly important role in the Russell Stock Company's productions too. However, in this case the trend perhaps more important to Edmontonians is the fact that the scenery and effects were now built in the city itself. In September, elaborate scenery was built for Quo Vadis which included Nero's palace and the great arena. A special feature also built in Edmonton was the burning of Rome.²⁵⁹ Mr. Kildson was the scenic artist who constructed this set and others for the Dominion Theatre such as that

255. Bulletin, August 17, 1908.

256. Bulletin, August 18, 1908.

257. Bulletin, August 31, 1908.

258. Bulletin, August 25, 1908.

259. Bulletin, September 3, 1908.

for The Wolfe in which a scene of the Saskatchewan River occupied a large portion of the stage with a canvas in operation in the background.²⁶⁰ Russell productions in September also included Polly Prim-Rose, which was Jeanne Russell's one-hundredth performance in Edmonton,²⁶¹ Traps, A Lesson in Whist,²⁶² The Little Minister,²⁶³ The Power of the Cross²⁶⁴ and In a Woman's Power.²⁶⁵

Mr. Kildson's efforts for the October productions were also impressive and well received. For A Kentucky Wild Flower his scenery, according to the Bulletin, was "a dream of delight."²⁶⁶ For Thelma, Mr. Brandon, manager of the Dominion, gave the designer and electrician 'carte blanche' in their respective departments. As a result the scenery which showed the Njendezgozo Falls surpassed in artistic beauty anything yet offered by a popular priced company.²⁶⁷ Miss Russell's other productions in October included The Thief,²⁶⁸ Cousin Kate,²⁶⁹ and The Devil.²⁷⁰ The Jeanne Russell company presented the latter play as their farewell performance during their closing week at the

260. Bulletin, September 22, 1908.

261. Bulletin, September 2, 1908.

262. Bulletin, September 10, 1908.

263. Bulletin, September 12, 1908.

264. Bulletin, September 17, 1908.

265. Bulletin, September 23, 1908.

266. Bulletin, October 2, 1908.

267. Bulletin, October 13, 1908.

268. Bulletin, October 2, 1908.

269. Bulletin, October 14, 1908.

270. Bulletin, October 21, 1908.

Dominion. Writing of the history of The Devil, the Bulletin said:

It set New York Crazy, drove Boston into ecstacies of introspection and made all the naughty senators, in Washington look serious. It is being played in all the principal theatres all over the world, and translated into every tongue.²⁷¹

The Allen Stock Company played several one week engagements, [during which time they averaged two plays per week], at the Edmonton Opera House in September, October and November of 1908. The fare they presented was not of an exceptionally unique nature, most of the plays having been produced in Edmonton before. Their productions during these first three months included Zaza, the play that made Mrs. Leslie Carter famous;²⁷² Little Lord Fauntleroy, which starred Baby Adele Meredith;²⁷³ Under Two Flags;²⁷⁴ A Friend of the Family;²⁷⁵ In the Bishop's Carriage, which presented elaborate scenery and mechanical effects including a swellcoach, a span of horses and an automobile on stage;²⁷⁶ and The Heir to the Hurrah.²⁷⁷

With the play, A Stranger in a Strange Land, the Allen Stock Com-

271. Bulletin, October 28, 1908.

272. Bulletin, September 17, 1908.

273. "This child of not more than eight summers possessed distinct talent. It was strikingly apparent that she was not spoiled by appearing before the public and receiving merited applause...." Bulletin, September 25, 1908.

274. Bulletin, October 12, 1908.

275. Bulletin, October 14, 1908.

276. Bulletin, October 22, 1908.

277. Bulletin, October 22, 1908.

pany began their residency in the Dominion Theatre, following the Jeanne Russell Company.²⁷⁸ Their productions during their ten weeks engagement²⁷⁹ included A Friend of the Family,²⁸⁰ The Two Orphans,²⁸¹ Camille,²⁸² Brown's in Town,²⁸³ La Belle Marie,²⁸⁴ Our New Girl,²⁸⁵ Whose Baby Are You?, Other People's Money,²⁸⁶ Shall We Forgive Her? and All Due to Diana.²⁸⁷

The Stoddard Stock Company was the last of the major theatrical road companies to visit Edmonton in 1908. They opened their two weeks' engagement at the Edmonton Opera House during Christmas week with Tom Moore, a play regarding the courtship of the poet, his rise to popularity in London, his fall and his subsequent salvation through his poem "The Last Rose of Summer."²⁸⁸ The Stoddard's second production was The Westerner, in which no expense was spared in order to include a realistic reproduction of the thrilling moments when in the flash of the ticking machine vast fortunes changed hands, and a man could

278. Bulletin, October 31, 1908.

279. Bulletin, November 2, 1908.

280. Bulletin, November 10, 1908.

281. Bulletin, November 11, 1908.

282. Bulletin, November 27, 1908.

283. Bulletin, December 2, 1908.

284. Bulletin, December 7, 1908.

285. Bulletin, December 8, 1908.

286. Bulletin, December 21, 1908.

287. Bulletin, December 28, 1908.

288. Bulletin, December 12, 1908.

be one moment a millionaire and the next a ruined penniless beggar.²⁸⁹

The troupe's other productions at the Opera House included The Girl of the Golden West, The Man of the Hour,²⁹⁰ Young Mrs. Winthrop,²⁹¹ The Christian, The Bell of Richmond²⁹² and The Devil.²⁹³ Despite the fact that the latter play had been done by Jeanne Russell in October, it nevertheless had greater impact on Edmontonians than any other play the Stoddard Company produced in the city:

When the curtain rose there was a hush throughout the entire audience which extended from the front to the last seat in the 'gods'. Some one had said that the play was 'immoral'; others had said that it all depended on how you looked at it. Curiosity was the dominant mental activity, as strong in the man of fifty as in the youth in his teens.

The audience was expecting something suggestive and they got it. A mirror was held up to nature, to two very realistic human natures and there was reflected a picture of sin and sensuality. The drama shows how his Satanic Majesty, in the human form of Dr. Miller, plays on the passions of a man and a woman - feeds and fans the flame of a six year-old love, until they both surrender to sin and at the final curtain they stand clasped in each other's arms.

...

289. Bulletin, December 14, 1908.

290. Bulletin, December 23, 1908.

291. Bulletin, December 30, 1908.

292. Bulletin, December 31, 1908.

293. Bulletin, December 29, 1908.

Is the play immoral you ask? No one left the house last night under the cloak of indignation. Perhaps there was a feeling that 'if it is good enough for Smith, well I guess I can stay'. To be sure there are passages of actual vulgarity that 'leave a bad taste in the mouth'. Perhaps the presence of others, as in the theatre, makes an impropriety really improper. There were many, however, who were deeply absorbed in a philosophical study of the play as a powerful picture from life.²⁹⁴

294. Bulletin, December 29, 1908.

Minor Road Companies

The first decade of the twentieth century witnessed a great influx of dramatic road companies that were not especially eminent in their choice of plays, acting or staging. Most of these minor troupes made only one relatively short appearance in Edmonton and failed to generate much response from their audiences and critics. The first three years of the decade saw little in the way of minor dramatics as in all other forms of entertainment. The Breezy Time Company contacted Manager Robertson of Robertson's Hall in January of 1901 anxious to arrange a date for their summer tour. However, nothing more was heard of them.¹ The Casino Comedy Company came in 1903 and fairly well filled the Hall. However, "the show put on was a disgrace to an intelligent community."² The Bulletin did not elaborate.

The year 1904 showed a slight increase in this category as in all others. The Whites appeared in January, and although "The entertainment was one of the best of its kind ever given in Edmonton,"³ the Bulletin again did not elaborate. The Columbia Comedy Company played in Thistle Rink in August. Perhaps the troupe was more of a musical comedy or concert company, for Edmonton's Apollo Orchestra assisted them.⁴ The Buchanan Stock Company held the boards at Robertson's Hall in October and produced The Deputy Sheriff,⁵ Fanchon, the Merry

1. Bulletin, January 28, 1901.

2. Bulletin, May 1, 1903.

3. Bulletin, January 21, 1904.

4. Bulletin, August 10, 1904.

5. Bulletin, October 13, 1904.

Cricket,⁶ An Eye on Hubby⁷ and Kathleen Mavoureen.⁸ This group managed to solicit Edmontonians approval and during An Eye on Hubby, kept the audience in roars of laughter.⁹ The Stuart Comic Players supporting James F. Post, "the great Irish-Canadian"¹⁰ entertained Edmontonians later in October in the farce-comedy U and I. According to the advertisement in the Bulletin the play's success was "unequaled in the annals of theatrical history."¹¹ The Stuarts also produced Irish Aristocracy.¹²

In 1905 the Russell Davis Stock Company held the boards at Robertson's Hall with The Punkin Husker,¹³ The Friend of the Family,¹⁴ Autumn Leaves,¹⁵ A Truthful Liar and The Gambler's Daughter.¹⁶ This group like many of the lesser troupes presented as much vaudeville as drama, and used whatever gimmick they could to attract audiences. Russell Davis's company, for example, presented an outdoor show with Hildebrand, the German Samson, in a tug-of-war with fourteen of the strongest men Edmonton could produce.¹⁷

6. Bulletin, October 14, 1904.

7. Bulletin, October 15, 1904.

8. Bulletin, October 15, 1904.

9. Bulletin, October 15, 1904.

10. Bulletin, October 21, 1904.

11. Bulletin, October 21, 1904.

12. Bulletin, October 21, 1904.

13. Bulletin, April 8, 1905.

14. Bulletin, April 11, 1905.

15. Bulletin, April 11, 1905.

16. Bulletin, April 14, 1905.

17. Bulletin, April 8, 1905.

Edward R. Salter's Company appeared in July and presented Fabio Romani.¹⁸ The Bulletin's critic wrote that the plot treated of a wife's unfaithfulness and duplicity. When she and her lover contrived to entomb her husband alive, Mt. Vesuvius erupted and gave him his freedom allowing him to execute his vow of vengeance.¹⁹

The William Yule Company arrived for a two night's engagement in Thistle Rink in September with a repertoire of one-act plays. The company gave His Lordship the Burglar, In Honor Bound, A Happy Pair, The Baron's Wager, Drifted Apart and The Professor's Love Story.²⁰ Edmonton was especially pleased with this company, for their performances, according to the Bulletin, were superior.²¹ Mr. Yule, himself, was an excellent imitator and excelled as an Irish comedian.²²

In 1906, the McPhee Dramatic Specialty Company came with their orchestra and produced For Home and Honour²³ and Old Virginia.²⁴

The Claman Stock Company attracted Edmontonians in May of 1907 with the novelty of the clever child actress, Baby Claman. The company held forth at the Opera House for four nights with Our Wild Cat, The Prince of Liars, East Lynne, For His Mother's Honor and My Nephew's Wife Jane.²⁵

18. Bulletin, July 18, 1905.

19. Bulletin, July 20, 1905.

20. Bulletin, September 9, 1905.

21. Bulletin, September 11, 1905.

22. Bulletin, September 12, 1905.

23. Bulletin, March 21, 1906.

24. Bulletin, March 21, 1906.

25. Bulletin, May 22, 1907.

In September, Happy Hooligan presented "two merry jingling farces"²⁶ Hooligan's Troubles and Alphonse and Gaston.²⁷ This troupe that graced the audience of Thistle Rink

...came a trifle too early. Had it been Dec. 12th instead of Sept. 12th the frost would have assured skating for the winter. There may be worse actors on earth but up to the hour of going to press they have not been apprehended. The plot [of Alphonse and Gaston] has not yet been identified and there is a rumor that the stage manager mislaid it in the wings before the curtain went up. Certainly it never got onto the stage. The gags were each and all old enough to vote and some of them had whiskers that put them into the John Alexander Dowie class. The ladies were not beautiful neither were they graceful. If it was desirable to roast the poor misguided creatures it might also be added that they could not act. The only thoroughly efficient performer was the man who took the money at the door. His hand never trembled.²⁸

Alas, what the hard working, long-suffering barnstormers had to endure at the hands of frontier, part-time theatre critics!

Brandon's Players performed in the fall in "the greatest of all western dramas,"²⁹ A Texas Ranger as well as Moonshiner's Daughter and In Missouri.³⁰ In reviewing A Texas Ranger, the Bulletin critic felt

26. Bulletin, September 10, 1906.

27. Bulletin, September 10, 1906.

28. Bulletin, September 13, 1906.

29. Bulletin, November 8, 1907

30. Bulletin, November 12, 1907.

that "The quality of the acting could hardly be criticised as regards melodrama, but there were a few places, where at times the acting was rather crude, and if anything slightly vulgar."³¹

Ernest Fisher and his New York Company exhibited what was perhaps one example of play pirating among many when they produced As Told in the Hills at the Opera House in January of 1908. The Bulletin claimed that the play was Tennessee's Partner renamed, but added, "after all, what's in a name?"³² Fisher's troupe also performed The Fatal Wedding and At Cripple Creek.³³

Arrington's Comedians were perhaps slightly better than the usual run of second-rate barnstormers. In an advance article, the Bulletin, went so far as to claim that the company ranked as one of the very largest and finest repertoire companies on the road³⁴ and could not be classed with the ordinary repertoire group as its salary was about double that of the average company.³⁵ This criterion for artistic judgment did not hold up in performance, for in a review of Jim, the Westerner, the critic announced that "there is a tendency among the players...to rely too much upon their lungs and swagger without trying to reflect the intellectual qualities of their parts."³⁶ Arrington's Comedians carried on the curious tradition of wearing hockey team's

31. Bulletin, November 12, 1907.

32. Bulletin, January 2, 1908.

33. Bulletin, January 2, 1908.

34. Bulletin, March 6, 1908.

35. Bulletin, March 6, 1908.

36. Bulletin, March 10, 1908.

colors during a performance. The members of the Portage La Prairie and Edmonton teams were present for the performance of An American Girl and showed their loyalty to their colors when they were worn by different members of the orchestra and company.³⁷

The company also produced Golden Grant Mine, Under Two Flags, Queen's Evidence, Sandy Bottom,³⁸ A Bosom Friend of Bowser,³⁹ The Belle of Richmond, Kathleen Mavoureen, The Squaw Man, East Lynne, In Old Kentucky, Northern Lights, Ten Nights in a Bar Room and Uncle Tom's Cabin.⁴⁰

The Clay Clement Company which also came in the spring of 1908 again was slightly above the average troupe touring the Northwest circuit. Indeed, Mr. Clement was a bit of a playwright himself and wrote one of the plays his company produced in Edmonton titled The New Dominion.⁴¹ His repertoire was also better than most of the lesser companies and included The Bells, London Assurance, Pygmalion and Galatea, A Message from Waterloo, Hamlet and The Mountebank.⁴² Mr. Clement and his company were fairly praised for their performances.⁴³ In reviewing Hamlet the Bulletin's critic said that in his portrayal of the role, Mr. Clement played some of the more tragic parts with power.⁴⁴

37. Bulletin, March 11, 1908.

38. Bulletin, March 14, 1908.

39. Bulletin, March 12, 1908.

40. Bulletin, March 16, 1908.

41. Bulletin, March 17, 1908.

42. Bulletin, March 20, 1908.

43. Bulletin, March 25, 1908: Bulletin, March 26, 1908.

44. Bulletin, April 1, 1908.

The Holden Comedy Company specialized in spectacular stage effects. Their first production in Edmonton was What Women Will Do, a melodrama founded on Dickens' David Copperfield. The spectacular novelties included a shipwreck scene, a hand-to-hand fight in a storm, the old Peggoty ship turned upside down on the beach, and a village churchyard in winter.⁴⁵ Another play, The Denver Express, showed existence among the snow-capped hills of Colorado and also life in an elegant mansion where the society of Denver congregated.⁴⁶ Holden's production of Nobody's Claim included a scene of the passing of an express train of passenger coaches going at a speed of forty miles per hour, "so manipulated as to more closely resemble a train than any other mechanical effect"⁴⁷ then travelling.

Miss Virginia Brissac, an emotional actress of the highest order, appeared at the Edmonton Opera House in June. With her company she performed Zaza, Sunday and Cousin Kate, Magda, Candida, Because She Loved Him So, The Transgressor and Camille.⁴⁸ The Stuttz Company arrived in December and played in The Bells of Shandon⁴⁹ and East Lynne.⁵⁰

45. Bulletin, May 4, 1908.

46. Bulletin, May 5, 1908.

47. Bulletin, May 6, 1908.

48. Bulletin, June 25, 1908.

49. Bulletin, December 11, 1908.

50. Bulletin, December 12, 1908.

In addition to the companies that toured with several plays in their repertoire were those that toured only one play, often cashing in on the fame of its New York success and even taking the title of the play as the name of their group. In some cases the troupe was formed by the original cast of the play. C. P. Walker, that well-known man of the theatre from Winnipeg, who controlled the Red River Valley Circuit and sent Harold Nelson across the plains, also managed a number of these one-play troupes. Mr. Walker's first such venture was in 1904 when he directed the Western Canada tour of What Happened to Jones. The play was performed by the same company that had played the comedy in the large cities of the middle western states.⁵¹ Manager Walker kept up the standard he set with the Harold Nelson Company, for the Jones troupe was provided with special scenery and handsome costumes, "exactly the same as in the larger cities."⁵²

In 1907 Mr. Walker toured the west with David B. Galley and a supporting company from New York with the comedy We Are King.⁵³ The play was based on Anthony Hope's Prisoner of Zenda.⁵⁴ The reviewer in the Bulletin praised Mr. Galley's performance which was very satisfying in its interpretation and kept the audience marvelling at his quick changes from character to character.⁵⁵ In December of the same year Walker dir-

51. Bulletin, January 13, 1904.

52. Bulletin, January 25, 1904.

53. Bulletin, October 14, 1907.

54. Bulletin, October 19, 1907.

55. Bulletin, October 19, 1907.

ected an eighteen city Canadian tour of "the greatest play in the history of the drama,"⁵⁶ The Bonnie Briar Bush. The play was a dramatization by James MacArthur of Ian MacLaren's story of the same name. This production too was up to Walker's usual standards: The company was composed of thirty people, among them players of prominence such as J. Palmer Collins, Walter Scott Weeks and Ward E. Renselion. Also a feature for the tour was the engagement of Australia's nightingale, Miss Maggie McCann, "the sweetest singer of Scottish songs that ever visited Canada."⁵⁷ The company carried the entire New York scenic production and electrical equipment, necessitating a special baggage car for the transportation.⁵⁸ The review of the production was especially good, each of the principals praised for their portrayals. The Bulletin felt justified in saying that not since Mrs. Fiske played in the city had so satisfactory a company appeared in Edmonton.⁵⁹

The first years of the century saw a number of other companies that toured with one play. In 1903 Harry Lindley produced The Railroad of Life.⁶⁰ The Jerry from Kerry Company performed a play by the same name in November of 1906⁶¹ and was followed a few days later by the Out in Idaho Company.⁶²

The Union Amusement Company scored a success in the Edmonton Opera

56. Bulletin, December 4, 1907.

57. Bulletin, December 4, 1907.

58. Bulletin, December 4, 1907.

59. Bulletin, December 28, 1907.

60. Bulletin, October 10, 1904.

61. Bulletin, November 7, 1906.

62. Bulletin, November 12, 1906.

House in 1907 with Peck's Bad Boy. Margaret Ryan played the title role and gave "a good exhibition of a lad in whom the play instinct combined with the innate perversity of childhood, as viewed by the eyes of age, was the central thought in the development of the play."⁶³ A production of A Pair of Country Kids which hinged on spectacle such as a wharf scene, a rescue from the waves and a country dance held the boards of the Opera House for two nights later in the summer.⁶⁴ In October the four act comedy drama, The Messenger Boy, was played by a company composed of twenty people supporting the comedian Beatrice Perry in the role of Roxy the Waif. The troupe also carried their own orchestra.⁶⁵

The year 1908 brought more such one-production companies than any other single year. The Parish Priest was presented at the Opera House in January. The Bulletin's reports lauded the play because one of the greatest features was the total absence of melodramatic elements. It was "just a plain, simple story of interest to all dealing with people and facts as we see them in our every day life. The customary villain was very conspicuous by his absence, and during the entire presentation no gun or knife was in evidence."⁶⁶ Perhaps the audiences of the Northwest, the more sophisticated members at any rate, were beginning to have their fill of a continual fare of melodrama. A Noble Outcast under the direction of Irving Berrsis followed in February,⁶⁷ No Mother to Guide

63. Bulletin, June 27, 1907.

64. Bulletin, August 21, 1907.

65. Bulletin, October 4, 1907.

66. Bulletin, January 18, 1908.

67. Bulletin, February 20, 1908.

Her in April⁶⁸ and David Harum in June.⁶⁹ The latter production was engaged by Mr. Brandon of the Dominion Theatre during fair week in 1908 and starred Mr. Carl Caldwell and Miss Jane Doisey, both of whom created the original roles.⁷⁰ An excellent review of the play followed its production, and indeed its popularity was so great that long before the curtain rose the house was filled to the doors and hundreds had to be turned away.⁷¹

A most sumptuous production as far as spectacle was concerned, at any rate, was Porter J. White's elaborate renewal of Goethe's Faust in August. The show was advertised to be the largest scenic production ever on tour through the Canadian Northwest.⁷² Mr. White's presentation included effects such as The Rain of Fire, The Electric Sword Duel, The Electric Fire Flies, The Electric Flower Bed, The Electric Morning Glories, The Electric Necklace, The Electric Circle of Fire, The Electric Skull and Electric Owls, Snakes and other effects.⁷³ Electricity probably had reached the summit of its popularity in staging spectacle. This production starred Miss Olga Verne as Marguerite supported by a Metropolitan company.⁷⁴ With the amount of apparatus that must have been necessary to stage some of these productions, it is little wonder that many companies toured with only one play in their repertoire.

68. Bulletin, April 18, 1908.

69. Bulletin, June 18, 1908.

70. Bulletin, June 18, 1908.

71. Bulletin, June 23, 1908.

72. Bulletin, August 25, 1908.

73. Bulletin, August 28, 1908.

74. Bulletin, August 25, 1908.

Another spectacular production appeared in November. The New England comedy Along the Kennebec, then in its fourth season, included such scenes as a realistic snow storm, a duel scene and a thrilling explosion scene.⁷⁵ This play must have been worth more than the effects necessary to stage it, for it had been used as a text by two ministers in their sermons!⁷⁶

A special genre of dramatic touring company that visited Edmonton throughout the decade was the spectacular Uncle Tom's Cabin Troupe. In 1903 Wilson's Mammoth Spectacular Uncle Tom's Cabin and Ten Nights in a Barroom Company, composed of twenty-five people, a concert band, a troupe of 'genuine' jubilee singers and a pack of Siberian bloodhounds visited Edmonton. It took two special pullman cars to carry the company and a car for the special scenery.⁷⁷ It is little wonder that after a buildup such as this "one of the largest crowds that's ever turned out to witness a play in Edmonton"⁷⁸ greeted this troupe. Unfortunately the company was not good enough, however, to please the theatre-goers. Two features of the Uncle Tom's Cabin production were particularly irritating. One was "the agony of advertising talk and the other the irritating interruption to sell tickets for the after-show. The after-show was, as all after shows are, strictly rotten."⁷⁹

Seven year old Little Lois Wilson, however, managed to salvage the

75. Bulletin, November 19, 1908.

76. Bulletin, November 18, 1908.

77. Bulletin, January 24, 1903.

78. Bulletin, January 24, 1903

79. Bulletin, January 24, 1903.

show to some extent. As Little Eva she was well received and "certainly quite clever for her age."⁸⁰ Also, Bert Imson, as Marks, created much fun and W. A. Nairn, "took the part of Uncle Tom very well."⁸¹

The troupe fell even further in their second production of Ten Nights in a Barroom:

They had a fairly full house, the only excuse for which was that the audience probably considered any old play better than no play at all. Certain it was that the merits of the troupe cut no figure. But in places where good shows are few and far between even a dog fight to break the monotony would draw a crowd.⁸² The least that can be said is that the play was flat. The most thrilling parts were so ridiculously taken as to make the whole plot an ancient joke.⁸³

To Robertson's Hall in March of 1906 came Settson's Original Big Double Spectacular Uncle Tom's Cabin Company. 'The Barnum of them all,' this troupe advertised more grand novelties than ever: gorgeous scenery, mechanical effects, Prof. Gerlach's military band, a colored female drum core, bloodhounds, a genuine cakewalker, male and female quartettes, buck and wing dancers, jubilee singers, a grand vision and a transformation scene.⁸⁴

Andrew McPhee's Big Pavilion Uncle Tom's Cabin Company was unique,

80. Bulletin, January 24, 1903.

81. Bulletin, January 24, 1903.

82. It may be recalled that the first few years of the new century were rather bleak as far as professional entertainment in Edmonton was concerned.

83. Bulletin, January 26, 1903.

84. Bulletin, March 12, 1906.

however, because they performed in their own big waterproof tent and carried with them the Original Log Cabin! [Ironically, despite the waterproof tent advertised, the show was held in the Opera House because of uncertain weather.] The troupe of fifty also carried with them a number of horses, a pack of Siberian bloodhounds, and jubilee singers and dancers from 'the sunny south'. Special features included Eva and her pet pony, Marks and his funny donkey, 'Our Funny Topsy!', Uncle Tom and his Ox Cart and Shetland ponies.⁸⁵

But the greatest and grandest of them all was Stetson's Uncle Tom's Cabin Company that performed in the Opera House in the fall of 1907. On the road for twenty years, the troupe had advanced steadily each season, "with the wonderful stride of progress"⁸⁶ so that on their arrival in Edmonton they were able to boast special scenery by Seavey carried for every scene depicted, a corps of colored singers, cakewalkers, dancers and fieldhands from the cotton belt to lend realism to the plantation scenes.⁸⁷ Special scenes included a Mississippi landing with the arrival of a cotton boat, the manner of its unloading, as well as genuine buck and wing dancing.⁸⁸ Stetson's company required a train of railroad cars, especially constructed in order to transport their cast and materials. The Uncle Tom's Cabin Troupes drew nearer to circuses than dramatic companies. The Stetson troupe, however, claimed to present more than just spectacle. Their production was designed to show the black man in his joys and sorrows so realistically that it was "hard to imagine

85. Bulletin, March 12, 1906.

86. Bulletin, October 30, 1907.

87. Bulletin, October 30, 1907.

88. Bulletin, November 2, 1907.

the spectator...not acutally on the plantation,"⁸⁹ One example of the sociological temper of the show was the 'forcible' presentation of the evolution of the negro since "the late unpleasantness"⁹⁰ in the great cakewalking contest, wherein twenty darky ladies and beaux vied with each other to win the cake.⁹¹

89. Bulletin, November 2, 1907.

90. Bulletin, November 2, 1907.

91. Bulletin, November 2, 1907.

Chapter V

Other Forms of Entertainment

Professional hypnotists and phrenologists abounded in these early years of the new century. In 1902 came C. Eymundson, Icelandic investigator of mystery and student of occult science. Mr. Eymundson performed at McMillan's boarding house and like his followers in later years impressed Edmontonians with his novel talents. He specialized in reading the contents of unopened envelopes.¹

The Griffith Company of Hypnotists appeared in Robertson's Hall in the spring of 1903. The performance included a lecture on the science of hypnotism followed by a demonstration in which a number of young men were mesmerized and put through a variety of funny situations. A Bulletin reporter found it quite amazing to see their shame-faced looks when on suddenly being taken out of the state to see their companions acting so simply.² To conclude the evening Griffith put a member of his company to sleep for forty-six hours and placed him in exhibition in the window of J. H. Morris' dry goods store. He was to be awakened during a subsequent performance.³ A following entertainment by the company afforded 'loads of amusement' but did not entirely succeed because Mr. Griffith failed to confine his attention to his "genuinely hypnotized subjects."⁴ A stone breaking feature failed because a sledge hammer was not available and then the rock could not be lifted onto the subject's body!⁵

1. Bulletin, July 18, 1902.

2. Bulletin, April 21, 1903.

3. Bulletin, April 21, 1903.

4. Bulletin, April 25, 1903.

5. Bulletin, April 25, 1903.

In June, Professor Mobius, palmist and phrenologist, who had appeared in Edmonton in the late nineties, again took up his trade at the Alberta Hotel.⁶ A year later Mlle. Best, gold medallist and wonder of the twentieth century, demonstrated her powers as a phrenologist, palmist and clairvoyant at the Queen's Hotel. Mlle. Best could reveal the present, past and future, and indeed had predicted the Frank disaster and the Fernie fire.⁷

The Theo. Pull Company of Hypnotists and Mind Readers held the boards in Robertson's Hall for four nights in 1905, followed the next year by "not only the ablest phrenologist in America, but one of the most popular speakers on the lecture platform" of the day.⁸ Professor W. G. Alexander's evening's entertainment consisted of a lecture followed by a public examination on the stage performed on ladies or gentlemen selected by the audience. Each evening Professor Alexander spoke on a different topic. His lectures in Edmonton were on "Human Nature", "Success in Life", "Temperaments", "Who Are Our Benefactors?", "Lectures for Men Only", and "Love, Courtship, Marriage and Jealousy". He took his lectures very seriously for in order to assure attention he charged small boys accompanied by their parents ten cents and crying babies \$4.50.⁹ Professor Alexander was the most successful entertainer in his category who appeared in the city. He was a lecturer with "a happy knack of presenting the claims of the science

6. Bulletin, June 13, 1903.

7. Bulletin, July 5, 1904.

8. Bulletin, March 6, 1906.

9. Bulletin, March 6, 1906.

he championed in an interesting and logical manner."¹⁰

The seriousness with which Professor Alexander professed his cause and with which Edmontonians viewed it is well demonstrated in the Bulletin's review of one of his lectures:

The idea which he sought to bring before the audience last night was that character could not be read by bumps on the head, but rather by a complete study of the quality and temperament of the organization, the pathological conditions, and the general development of the brain...Professor Alexander contrasted types in which the animal faculties were largely developed, and the others low or moderate with those having the animal faculties small, the intellectual or moral faculties large. He also contrasted the wide headed politician or preacher with the narrow headed men in the same business, and held that those with the wider craniums were the most aggressive, positive and domineering, while those with narrow skulls were more mild and insinuating and worked along quieter and easier lines.¹¹

The Great McEwen came twice to Edmonton in 1907. On his first engagement he gave exhibitions of mind reading and "contrary to all laws of gravitation known to the ordinary individual...caused a woman to rise in mid-air and passed a solid hoop over her body to show nothing present to support or suspend her weight."¹² His second engagement in

10. Bulletin, March 8, 1906.

11. Bulletin, March 8, 1906.

12. Bulletin, February 9, 1907.

the fall was more elaborate consisting of hypnotism, magical tricks with elaborate equipment and three 'high-class' vaudeville acts complete with new scenic equipment.¹³

Professor Greaves, an English hypnotist was not as successful as his two predecessors. His attitude must have been quite superior for the Bulletin reviewer claimed that he appeared in the Opera House in 1907 "with sufficient assurance to make him president of the United States, were he born right."¹⁴ As a hypnotist too, the Bulletin continued, "He was a complete false alarm. He may not have been a fake, but as a mesmerist his ability was anything but pronounced. The audience suffered his show because it was so palpably a frost. Professor Greaves will probably not return to Edmonton."¹⁵

A Parisian hypnotist, Professor Willey, returned the science to its original standing in Edmonton with his engagement in August of 1908. Professor Willey had made a life-time study of hypnotism and was also an expert telepathist, reading the minds of his audience "without the slightest effort."¹⁶

Lecturers also played their parts in amusing and instructing the audiences along the Northwest circuit. Many of them were only semi-professional in that they were men of the cloth who came from neighboring towns, cities, provinces and states with stories of travel and

13. Bulletin, November 14, 1907.

14. Bulletin, October 18, 1907.

15. Bulletin, October 18, 1907.

16. Bulletin, August 3, 1908.

of current events of great magnitude that they had witnessed. For example, in 1901, Father Sinnet gave an illustrated lecture in Robertson's Hall on the South African War, then raging fiercely and dominating newspaper space and conversation.¹⁷ Lectures were less frequent now than in the 1890's and still held principally in churches and church halls. For example, Franklin Pierce Jolly delivered his 'famous' lecture The Jolly Side of Life in the Baptist Church in September of 1906.¹⁸

The great influx of professional entertainment in Edmonton during the first decade of the twentieth century extended to almost every other form of theatre, using the word theatre in its broadest sense. February, 1901, saw the "fast and graceful performer on the winged steel,"¹⁹ the skater, Norval Barley. Unfortunately, he came to grief just before the conclusion of his performance:

Just as he was finishing the quarter, and while skating at terrific speed, his foot struck an obstruction and he fell. So swift was the speed and so great the momentum that the skater seemed to shoot on the air before pitching headlong on the ice. The fall was a cruel one, but Barley pluckily struggled to his feet and with blood running from his face and mouth was taken to the dressing room.²⁰

17. Bulletin, July 1, 1901.

18. Bulletin, September 18, 1906.

19. Bulletin, February 15, 1901.

20. Bulletin, February 15, 1901.

November, 1902 saw a group of comedians called the Boston Entertainers. An advance article in the Bulletin a few days before the performance reprinted several comments of praise from other newspapers in Canada and the United States.²¹ After the performance, the Bulletin's critic commented on the good work done by the troupe's advertising agent then abruptly added: "A performance announced for Tuesday night did not take place. The lady reciter was said to be sick, probably caught it from the audience on Monday night. Fortunately, many of them escaped before the last agony or she might have been worse."²²

J. W. Bengough, "Canada's foremost cartoonist"²³ and entertainer, appeared in Robertson's Hall early in 1903. Mr. Bengough told humorous stories punctuated by witty and spicy remarks. For his impersonations he received well-merited applause, but was at his best in drawing and sketching. Starting with geometrical figures by adding and shading, he rapidly transformed them into very clear representations of men, women and children.²⁴ A feature of the evening was a sketching of local characters.²⁵

E. Pauline Johnson, that "well 'Beloved Vagabond' who loved any trail old or new,"²⁶ returned to Edmonton in 1904, this time with

21. Bulletin, November 10, 1902.

22. Bulletin, November 14, 1902.

23. Bulletin, May 11, 1903.

24. Bulletin, May 13, 1903.

25. Bulletin, May 13, 1903.

26. McRaye, Town Hall, p. 37.

Walter McRaye, also famous as a reciter of Canadian verse. Bulmer Watt remembered that Miss Johnson appeared in native costume which brought much dramatic intensity to the recital of her verse.²⁷ Walter McRaye recalled too that: "Her reading of fiery verse dealing with some Indian wrong or injustice still lives in the memory of those who heard her."²⁸ In a later book of reminiscences, Mr. McRaye described her costume which consisted of a

...beautiful dress trimmed with ermine skins, and with silver broaches scattered over the bodice. These were very old and had been hammered from silver coins by the native Indian silver-smiths. Two scalps hung suspended from her waist, a Huron scalp and one that had been given to her by a Blackfoot Chief. Around her neck was a beautifully graded cinnamon bear-claw necklace, and on her wrists bracelets of wampum beads. Draped around her shoulders was the broadcloth blanket used in the ceremony of chieftainhood conferred upon the Duke of Connaught; in her hair was an eagle feather. This costume was laid aside in the second half of the programme when she appeared in conventional evening dress.²⁹

The years of touring with Pauline Johnson, Walter McRaye remembers as packed with experiences and incidents full of tragedy and comedy:

27. Watt, Journal, September 23, 1949.

28. McRaye, Town Hall, p. 35

29. McRaye, Friends, pp. 61-62.

railroad and boat wrecks, late trains, fires that burned their hotels and opera houses, and drives across the prairie in winter that registered forty below. These experiences were all accepted by Miss Johnson as part of the game.³⁰ Indeed, "Every village, town and city in her native land knew and loved her."³¹

The year 1906 brought another reciter of verse to Edmonton. Miss Edna Sutherland gave readings from Ralph Connor, J. M. Barrie and Robert Browning on the first evening of her engagement. On the next, she presented the morality play, Everyman. Wrote the Bulletin:

Miss Sutherland's rendering is simply wonderful. The seventeen characters in the drama were presented absolutely distinctly. Each assumed in turn, the terrified Everyman, the awful enemy Death, the wordly minded Cosyn, Goodes leaning upon his staff as the miser clutching his gold, or Dame Fashion as Kindrede. The solemn tones of Adonai, the sweet low whispering of Good-Deedes, or the last parting words of Everyman, brought an absolute hush over the audience.³²

Longfellow's American saga, Hiawatha, drew a large audience to the Opera House in February, 1907. Mrs. Katherine Ertz-Bosden gave a "sympathetic and at times forceful interpretation of the poet's conception of the forest drama."³³ The recitation was illustrated by moving

30. McRaye, Friends, pp. 66.

31. Ibid., p. 115.

32. Bulletin, March 14, 1906.

33. Bulletin, February 14, 1907.

pictures of the scenery on the north shores of the Great Lakes.³⁴

In the fall, a miniature but realistic reconstruction of the Johnstown Flood was set up and demonstrated in Thistle Rink. The feature included a reproduction of the storm, a miniature railway, the city illuminated, the rush of water and a beautiful sunrise.³⁵

In 1908 'The 101 Ranch Wild West Show brought to Edmonton what was probably the greatest spectacle in its history. The people, stock and equipment were carried in twenty-seven large cars. The company claimed that a move of four hundred twelve miles from Prince Albert cost one thousand dollars. There were five hundred people connected with the show and three hundred seventy-two head of stock. Difficulty was encountered in unloading the show in Edmonton because of deep mud that had formed after heavy rains. Teams of twelve mules were required to haul the heavily laden wagons from the cars to the huge circus tents where the performances were to take place.³⁶

Circuses and carnivals played in Edmonton as well. Besides the annual summer fair which had become more industrialized and commercial than the essentially agricultural one in the nineties, came such shows as Arnold's Big Tent Show in the summer of 1905. This circus which advertised clean, inoffensive entertainment, had such typical circus acts as Austin and the funny clowns, the Three Flying Victor-ellas and various family groups of acrobats, jugglers and animal train-

34. Bulletin, February 14, 1907.

35. Bulletin, October 7, 1907.

36. Bulletin, June 29, 1908.

ers.³⁷ In July, 1906, for four days, Alberta held her first provincial fair in Edmonton.³⁸

Edmonton amateur theatre activity during the first decade of the twentieth century may be conveniently discussed under two general headings: amateur theatrical organizations and service and church club production. The first of the amateur groups formed specifically for producing plays was the Garrick Club formed under the direction of Vernon Barford.³⁹ The group's first play was The Strange Adventures of Miss Brown in April of 1902,⁴⁰ followed by What Happened to Jones? in June,⁴¹ and The Temple of Fame in November and December.⁴²

Early in 1903. Mr. Hepburn starred in and produced the play Shaun Aroon for two nights in Robertson's Hall.⁴³ The production had been carefully prepared and went through a five week rehearsal period.⁴⁴

In the fall of the same year, Vernon Barford formed another group called the Operatic and Dramatic Society.⁴⁵ The group performed about seven light operas in the next six years. Their first, The Chimes of

37. Bulletin, August 15, 1905.

38. Bulletin, Supplement, June 30, 1906.

39. Bulletin, March 28, 1902.

40. Bulletin, March 28, 1902.

41. Bulletin, June 14, 1902.

42. Bulletin, November 24, 1902; December 5, 1902.

43. Bulletin, February 14, 1903.

44. Bulletin, February 18, 1903.

45. Bulletin, November 25, 1903.

Normandy in 1904, boasted rented costumes from Chicago.⁴⁶

The Circle Dramatique was organized in 1904 and produced Mr. Penrichon on His Travels.⁴⁷ Successors to the La Cigale Company and the Garrick Company, the Edmonton Amateurs formed the same year and produced The Confederate Spy as their first play.⁴⁸ In March of 1905, the presentation of In the Trenches followed.⁴⁹

In the latter years of the decade various clubs became dramatically active. In 1907, the Beaver House chapter of the Daughter's of the Empire produced The Private Secretary at the Edmonton Opera House.⁵⁰ In the fall of the same year, the Knights of Pythias and the Pythian Sisters banded together and produced, appropriately, Damon and Pythias.⁵¹

In 1908, the Daughter's of the Empire produced Mr. Bob and Sweet Lavender,⁵² the Catholic Drama Club produced The Tyranny of Tears⁵³ and the St. Andrews and Caledonian Societies together produced Cramond Brig.⁵⁴

46. Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 240.

47. Bulletin, February 24, 1904.

48. Bulletin, March 1, 1904.

49. Bulletin, April 28, 1905.

50. Bulletin, January 8, 1907.

51. Bulletin, September 8, 1907.

52. Bulletin, January 17, 1908.

53. Bulletin, February 1, 1908.

54. Bulletin, March 2, 1908.

The years preceding the Great War continued to be years of expansion and prosperity for Edmonton.

As new hundreds flocked to town, new subdivisions proliferated, and hobble skirts flared out to a walking width, Edmonton grew at an amazing pace. As higher and higher the brick buildings rose till they were three and even four storeys - and higher and higher the women's skirts went till they were eight inches from the floor, Edmonton began to take on a new look.¹

Edmonton amalgamated with Strathcona in 1912 and the population in June, 1914 was reported to be seventy-two thousand, five hundred and sixteen, of which fifty-six thousand two hundred and twenty-nine were on the north side and sixteen thousand two hundred and eighty-seven across the river.² In keeping with the city's amazing growth the council launched a major public works program. When it was completed in 1914, the city boasted thirty-five miles of paved streets, one hundred forty miles of sidewalk and one hundred twenty-eight miles of water pipes.³

Again, Edmonton enjoyed an unprecedented influx of immigrants. Despite the fact that a curling rink and a number of school buildings were thrown open for temporary accommodations, often as many as two thousand seven hundred new citizens were camped in tents around the fringes of the city.⁴

1. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History, p. 177.

2. Ibid., p. 204.

3. Ibid., p. 202.

4. Ibid., p. 196.

By the outbreak of war, Edmonton boasted the eight-storey Tegler Building, the nine-storey McLeod Building, as well as the Civic Block. Another marvel, the high-level bridge was opened amid the blowing and shrieking of whistles, sirens and cheers in 1913.⁵

The new look was one of a real cosmopolitan city. Any semblance to an over-grown small town was gone forever, as Edmonton entered a new era as a major economic force of the Canadian West. Even the entertainment lost its frontier spirit, as touring companies previously independent, were at first absorbed then obliterated by the great American and Canadian circuits. Shows became packaged and commercial. By 1914, the drama of Nelson, Marks and Summers which evoked the freshness, perhaps crudeness and excitement of the frontier was gone. Their plays were replaced by stale, warmed-over New York successes turned out in succeeding three night stands by second rate troupes on the Orpheum Circuit.

Resident stock companies became more important but they evoked nothing of their environment and turned out on a regular basis light musical comedies and drama from Broadway.

Vaudeville and motion pictures became still more popular with new technical advances rapidly pushing the latter genre into greater dominance. Edmontonians flocked to the theatres in greater numbers than ever before, revelling in the supposed sophistication and cosmopolitanism of the machine drama. A success on Broadway meant sure success in Edmonton. A popular American film meant popularity in Edmonton. The legitimate playhouses were seldom dark, and movie and vaudeville houses sprang up one after the other.

5. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History, p. 201.

Part IV

The Empire Theatre

and

The Lyceum Theatre Years

Chapter I

The Empire Theatre's First Years

The story of the Empire Theatre between the years 1909 and 1914 falls into five distinct periods. The first three periods which consist of the vaudeville and kinetoscope seasons, the years of the three night stands of mostly familiar road companies and the era of the resident stock companies are discussed in this chapter. Chapter two deals with the fourth period of the three night stands of mostly new companies touring single Broadway successes and Chapter three with the fifth period of the Orpheum circuit shows.

In October, 1908, M. Kyle, manager of the Dominion Theatre in Winnipeg, arrived in Edmonton and announced his intention to convert Old Bennie's Dancing Academy on Third Street, north of the Hudson's Bay Store, into a theatre. The promoter of this new enterprise announced proudly that the building was to be renovated and placed in first-class condition.⁶

The new theatre was planned after the style of the new Gaiety Theatre in Toronto. Brick was used throughout and in pressed form created an especially imposing facade. The entire house was heated by steam on the latest approved plan and seated throughout with Andrew's opera chairs. A spacious lobby was built with stairs leading from the foyer on both sides directly from the street.⁷

The ceiling was decorated in a delicate shade of green relieved with gold, and the walls blended into buff relieved by handsome panels in red to suit the general color scheme.⁸ When the new playhouse opened

6. Bulletin, October 8, 1908.

7. Bulletin, November 23, 1908.

8. Bulletin, December 14, 1908.

on January 4, 1909, Edmontonians expressed delight at the luxurious appearance of the new theatre with its artistically decorated walls, its well arranged opera chairs and its commodious boxes. The Bulletin congratulated the management on the success with which it effected a playhouse on a distinctly metropolitan scale.⁹

In September of the same year, more re-touching had been done inside the house to make it as cozy as possible. A number of alterations were also made outside the building. The approach to the theatre was well-lighted and a big sign formerly in front, was moved to run diagonally across the roof of the building at an altitude of about twelve feet above the highest part. The sign not only gave a better display, but also lit the sidewalk almost up to the Hudson's Bay corner.¹⁰

Mr. Kyle, the proprietor, was also manager of the Empire vaudeville circuit,¹¹ so the new playhouse was named the Empire Theatre. The building was intended to serve as a vaudeville house, and indeed, for the first year only vaudeville was produced there. On the day of its opening, Mr. Kyle stated that no efforts were being spared to secure the best talent. The acts were all procured from the larger circuits in the United States and came with a guarantee of being the best in every respect.¹²

Manager Kyle was true to his word for almost immediately after its first show, the Empire became the leading vaudeville house in Edmonton, noted most for the quality and wholesomeness of its productions. The

9. Bulletin, January 5, 1909.

10. Bulletin, September 3, 1909.

11. Bulletin, November 23, 1908.

12. Bulletin, January 4, 1909.

Bulletin noted, for example, that the numbers on the opening programme were all high class vaudeville and included hand balancing, eccentric singing and dancing, a novel one-act comedy, The Dog Catcher, Mantell's Marionette Show, in which all sorts of diminutive figures were made to imitate real performers, and illustrated songs.¹³

Until the spring of 1910 when the Empire ceased producing vaudeville, one excellent review followed another and crowds continued to fill the house. In February the Bulletin reviewer was prompted to say that "As week succeeds week, the attractions at the Empire Theatre seem to improve."¹⁴ He stated earlier that Edmonton theatre-goers were getting exactly what was promised them when the popular playhouse first opened.¹⁵ Throughout the winter of 1909 such statements as the following proliferated:

The bill at the Empire this week is the best ever seen in that theatre. As comedy acrobats Steel and McMasters have never been equalled in Edmonton. Steel being the funniest in his line ever seen here.¹⁶ The fact that crowded houses are the rule and not the exception is ample evidence that the management of the Empire have solved the problem of how to please amusement loving people of Edmonton. Last night's performance upheld the high standard of excellence attained by this playhouse since the opening night, and the audience went away well

13. Bulletin, January 5, 1909.

14. Bulletin, February 9, 1909.

15. Bulletin, January 26, 1909.

16. Bulletin, February 5, 1909.

satisfied with the evenings entertainment.¹⁷ A record-breaking house saw last night's performance at the Empire Theatre and the all-star bill was thoroughly enjoyed....This ought to be a banner week as far as attendance is concerned.¹⁸ The bill at the Empire this week is equal in excellence to any offerings of previous weeks.¹⁹ The Empire Theatre is undoubtedly one of the most attractive spots in the city for those who enjoy a good, healthy and laughable entertainment. From the opening overture to 'God Save the King' every minute is filled with amusement that is worth hearing.²⁰

A wholesome bill free from suggestive actions and vulgar remarks was an important ingredient in producing a show of high quality. Edmonton critics were most impressed with this aspect of the Empire's vaudeville acts:

When the curtain goes up at the Empire tonight, it will be to one of the strongest bills yet presented. Large houses have long since been the rule at this popular place of amusement, but Monday night always sees the house packed--and if good, clean comedy, sweet singing and clever sketches are an inducement to theatre-goers, then tonight will see the 'Standing Room Only' sign displayed.²¹

17. Bulletin, February 6, 1909.

18. Bulletin, February 23, 1909.

19. Bulletin, March 9, 1909.

20. Bulletin, March 11, 1909.

21. Bulletin, April 19, 1909.

The Empire was the only vaudeville house in Edmonton to regularly advertise its bill.²² The enthusiasm, genuine interest in its product, and the desire to provide clean, wholesome acts rather than only make money was perhaps what prompted the Bulletin and Journal to review almost every week's bill for the first year. The Empire circuit also provided a lengthy advance article regarding an upcoming bill which was published regularly in the Bulletin.

The most popular attraction of this first year of vaudeville at the Empire Theatre was John L. Sullivan and Jake Kilrain's programme which was on the boards in June. It was certainly the most eagerly anticipated:

A crowd will no doubt be at the station tomorrow when the train pulls in at Stratchona, to get a glimpse of John L. Sullivan and Jake Kilrain....It has been the opinion of some people in town that this was to be a moving picture entertainment, but if any doubt as to the genuiness of the attraction still lingers, it will be dispelled very quickly at train time tomorrow.²³

John L. Sullivan, of course, was the famous boxer, for twelve years heavyweight champion of the world. His show consisted of a short statement after which he jumped into a boxing ring erected on stage and proceeded to spar with Jake Kilrain. Although he weighed one hundred pounds more than when he won the heavyweight championship of the world, Mr. Sullivan didn't let his "avoir dupois" prevent him from performing

22. Advertisements for each week's programme were published in the Bulletin and Journal. The vaudeville programmes for this first period of 1909 have been reproduced from microfilm in Appendix A.

23. Bulletin, June 26, 1909.

with agility: "The big fellow hopped around last night like a kitten and lit into Kilrain with such vehemence that the referee, Mr. Hall, had to remind the sparring partners that the championship of the world was not at stake...."²⁴

In September, 1909, the Empire Theatre changed its affiliation to the Pantages circuit.²⁵ The bill was changed every Friday now rather than every Monday. In November, however, three night stands dominated as moving picture bills often displaced vaudeville.²⁶ The Empire continued in this affiliation until February, 1910.

The regular vaudeville series was interrupted in October, 1909 with the appearance on the Empire stage of the American actress, Hortense Neilson. With her productions of A Doll's House and Ghosts, Henrik Ibsen inaugurated the Empire as a dramatic theatre, although it was to be several months before play production overtook vaudeville. Miss Neilson was heralded as the greatest emotional actress on the American stage.²⁷ However, Ibsen's drama was unusual fare for Edmonton with the result that Miss Neilson elicited giggles rather than genuine heart interest from some members of the audience during a number of tense moments.²⁸ Bulmer Watt recalled that Norval McGregor, who shared the bill with Miss Neilson, stepped to the front of the stage and told the offenders that if they did not behave, he would have

24. Bulletin, June 29, 1909.

25. Bulletin, August 28, 1909.

26. The vaudeville advertisements of the Pantages circuit have been reproduced from microfilm in Appendix B.

27. Bulletin, October 26, 1909.

28. Bulletin, October 26, 1909.

the curtain rung down. The untimely mirth ceased after that.²⁹

By December of 1909 dramatic and musical comedy companies began to encroach more and more upon the vaudeville bills, until the fall of 1910 the latter had ceased to be produced completely, and the Empire embarked on its second major period. The first of these companies was the Stuttz Big Theatrical Company which played a special engagement in December.³⁰ This group was followed shortly after by the San Francisco Opera Company. Their first engagement at the Empire was for two nights and a matinee. They produced The Geisha, Martha and The Time, the Place and the Girl.³¹ Their second engagement was for three nights in February during which time they produced They Loved a Lassie, The Strollers,³² The Mascot and Fantana.³³

The second musical comedy company troupe to appear at the Empire was the Juvenile Bostonians Company which held the boards for three nights in December.³⁴ With Babe Mason still a member of the group and twenty other girl artists, they produced Bertha's Billion and Glory.³⁵ The Bulletin's critic was especially impressed with their performance during this engagement and exclaimed that there was not a more popular company visiting Edmonton and that they were even better this year than

29. Watt, Journal, September 24, 1949.

30. Bulletin, December 2, 1909.

31. Bulletin, December 7, 1909.

32. Bulletin, February 2, 1910.

33. Bulletin, February 12, 1910.

34. Bulletin, December 11, 1909.

35. Bulletin, December 11, 1909.

before.³⁶ When the Bostonians returned to the Empire stage in October of 1910, Babe Mason was missing from the cast. Her place was taken by her younger sister Lois. According to the Bulletin, she possessed much of Babe's irresistible comicality and charm of manner.³⁷ For this engagement the Bostonians produced The Ransom and The Rose of Blandeen.³⁸

During this Pantages era at the Empire several companies appeared that toured only one play. The first of these plays was The Bonnie Briar Bush produced in December.³⁹ It was followed by Innocent as a Lamb later the same month.⁴⁰ The National Stock Company opened a three night engagement in the Empire in February and played in Friends.⁴¹

In August, 1910, the Empire embarked on a programme completely devoid of vaudeville. Direct from an eight weeks engagement at the Orpheum Theatre in Calgary,⁴² Sherman's Musical Comedy Company had the honor of inaugurating the real beginning of this new era. During their engagement the troupe performed in Girls in Politics,⁴³ A Night at Coney Island,⁴⁴ Mistakes in Society⁴⁵ and The Wrong Mr. Wright.⁴⁶

36. Bulletin, December 17, 1909.

37. Bulletin, November 1, 1910

38. Bulletin, October 26, 1910.

39. Bulletin, December 18, 1909.

40. Bulletin, December 23, 1909.

41. Bulletin, February 17, 1910.

42. Bulletin, August 8, 1910.

43. Bulletin, August 11, 1910.

44. Bulletin, August 13, 1910.

45. Bulletin, August 17, 1910.

46. Bulletin, August 5, 1910.

Sherman's company performed well and received favorable reviews. Regarding the latter play, for example, the Bulletin critic said that the company "showed up well and went through their work in a business-like manner that showed skill and class."⁴⁷ The reviewer was especially pleased with Tom Beeson, the comedian of the company:

He gets more out of his work than the average man as he takes his time and gets his laughs in a legitimate way instead of the ranting, yelling kind of comedians who jump in and grab at any thing.⁴⁸

The critic also praised the chorus girls for their dancing, singing and costumes.⁴⁹

Later in August, Gus Weinburg held the boards at the Empire in The Burgo-Master.⁵⁰ Edmonton was well impressed with the production. Mr. Weinburg had created the role of Peter Stuyvesant, the governor of New Amsterdam who slept for two hundred years and awoke to find himself in New York.⁵¹ The production included a bewitching chorus of kangaroo girls⁵² and all new costumes and new scenery.⁵³ This show too was well appreciated by Edmonton theatre-goers. The critic of the Edmonton Capital⁵⁴ noted that the kangaroo girls had well trained voices and were

47. Bulletin, August 9, 1910.

48. Bulletin, August 9, 1910.

49. Bulletin, August 9, 1910.

50. Bulletin, August 17, 1910.

51. Bulletin, August 19, 1910.

52. Bulletin, August 17, 1910.

53. Bulletin, August 19, 1910.

54. The Capital began its publication in 1910.

good to look at. He added that a strong male chorus was also one of the hits of the show. Nevertheless, the chief honors went to Gus Weinburg who was the best funmaker of the evening.⁵⁵

In October, Harold Nelson returned to Edmonton once again and made his first appearance at the Empire in Pierre of the Plains.⁵⁶ The reviewers of both the Capital and the Bulletin agreed that the production was a success and that this was due primarily to Mr. Nelson himself who overshadowed all else.

His is a difficult part to take, half French, half Indian, with the weakness and strength of both....Mr. Nelson succeeds admirably the daredevil spirit of a reckless half-breed, of the son of a French father, and giving us a glimpse into the mysteries of the Indian plainsman's character.⁵⁷

The Bulletin added that Mr. Nelson's voice was particularly well suited to the French-Indian dialect.⁵⁸

Harold Nelson played a similar character in his second production of the engagement, the successful New York drama, The Wolf.⁵⁹ As a French-Canadian, he again made a hit portraying the principled and courageous character in a masterful way.⁶⁰

William Yule and Violet Eddy were the next attractions at the

55. Capital, August 23, 1910.

56. Bulletin, September 29, 1910.

57. Capital, October 4, 1910.

58. Bulletin, October 4, 1910.

59. Bulletin, September 29, 1910.

60. Capital, October 6, 1910.

Empire and created a success in Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. With scenery especially painted for this production,⁶¹ with the grace and sweetness of Miss Eddy's Viola,⁶² and with the superb comedy of Mr. Yule's Sir Toby Belch and the excellent portrayals of the rest of the artists,⁶³ a production of exceptional merit was witnessed.

Frederick Clarke appeared next in The Manxman⁶⁴ and was followed⁶⁵ later the same month by a production of A Bachelor's Honeymoon. The latter play was to star Rose Ainsworth but due to illness she was unable to appear. Nevertheless the show went on as scheduled with Macey Wills in the starring role and was a distinct success.⁶⁶

Having completed its eighth year of enormous business in America, its three hundreth performance at Terry's Theatre in London and a successful lengthy run in Australia, Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch was produced on the Empire stage by the Liebler Company later in October.⁶⁷ Both critics from the Capital and the Bulletin agreed that the wholesome, human tone of the play won the hearts of the audience and created the success. It was through Helen Weathersby's Mrs. Wiggs that this quality was most successfully evoked. The Capital critic wrote:

Mrs. Wiggs, of course, with her homely philosophy and
cheery humor won the hearts of all her visitors....

61. Bulletin, October 5, 1910.

62. Bulletin, October 8, 1910.

63. Capital, October 8, 1910.

64. Bulletin, October 11, 1910.

65. Bulletin, October 18, 1910.

66. Bulletin, October 21, 1910.

67. Bulletin, October 25, 1910.

Helen Weathersby played the part with exceptional skill and showed that self restraint that is the saving grace of good acting.⁶⁸

Also, according to the Bulletin: "Helen Weathersby as Mrs. Wiggs was all that could be desired and she showed her ability to cleverly handle not only the humorous pieces which fell to her, but also the...tragic situations with which she had to deal."⁶⁹

November saw the production of Ole Oleson starring Ben Hendricks who had become famous for the part and a great favorite as a delineator of the Swedish dialect character.⁷⁰ Unfortunately, however, the majority of the audience went away disappointed with the play. According to the Bulletin a considerable number left after the first act. The critic claimed that the plot was cheap and hinged around an unwelcomed appearance of a first husband who proceeded to evince his brutality.⁷¹

The production of Ole Oleson was followed by a more successful appearance of Germain, the famous British magician. His presentation was considered most complete, original and elaborate. Germain's program was divided into four parts: conjuring and sleight of hand, mind reading, demonstrations in spirit seance work, and illusions practised by the great fakers of the east.⁷²

Leah Stoddart and her company appeared at the Empire in November

68. Capital, October 28, 1910.

69. Bulletin, October 28, 1910.

70. Bulletin, October 28, 1910.

71. Bulletin, November 5, 1910.

72. Bulletin, November 4, 1910.

with the "merry musical mixup," ⁷³ My Wife's Family. According to the Capital, the company was a clever one and carried the farce through to the final curtain in finished style. ⁷⁴

After the appearance of the Stoddart Company the Empire embarked on its third period with the engagement of the Partello Company, the first resident stock troupe to occupy its stage. This group which starred Alice Kennedy and Jack Westerman had made several three night stands at the Empire before, however. In September, 1910, they produced A Merry Life and Lena Rivers. ⁷⁵ The Bulletin's review of the latter play was indicative of the popularity they were to receive during their stock engagement:

The play was a treat in its way and was fully appreciated by a well-filled house. Alice Kennedy in the title role scored a hit of the evening. The role of Lena Rivers, a young, motherless girl untrammelled by the conventionalities of modern society, yet charming in her simplicity and loyalty to a new found father, gave Miss Kennedy ample scope to display her talents. ⁷⁶

Miss Kennedy was again the chief factor for the success of the Partello Company's second engagement at the Empire in October. In The House of a Thousand Candles she was cast in a part that required

73. Bulletin, November 10, 1910.

74. Capital, November 14, 1910.

75. Bulletin, September 23, 1910.

76. Bulletin, September 27, 1910.

great strength as well as winsome girlishness, and "owing to her wonderful personality, and great versatility, was...enabled to portray the extremely hard part."⁷⁷ The troupe returned twice more to the Empire in the same month and with equal success played in St. Elmo⁷⁸ and Thelma.⁷⁹

The Partello's stock engagement began in November.⁸⁰ The majority of the plays were produced only a few weeks after their initial New York productions.⁸¹ The Bulletin claimed that during their stay in Edmonton, the Partellos gained more admirers and staunch patrons than any other organization that had ever played in Edmonton.⁸² The excellent reviews in both the Bulletin and the Capital of most of the productions showed that there was ample reason for this. Alice Kennedy was the most popular and successful member of the company. Reviewing her role in Carmen, the Capital's critic wrote that "to say that she was successful in her interpretation is putting it mildly, for she was all that could be desired in the part."⁸³ In his review of Salomy Jane the critic said that Miss Kennedy in the leading role was cast in a part that suited her temperament and ability to perfection and that the applause that greeted her throughout the entire performance was evidence that she

77. Bulletin, October 18, 1910.

78. Bulletin, October 21, 1910.

79. Bulletin, October 26, 1910.

80. A list of productions by the Partello Stock Company is included in Appendix D.

81. Bulletin, December 14, 1910.

82. Bulletin, December 14, 1910.

83. Capital, December 23, 1910.

84. Capital, December 30, 1910.

was as popular as ever.⁸⁴ In The College Widow Miss Kennedy "showed to great advantage as the Widow,"⁸⁵ and was the recipient of several presentations from the infatuated students in the body of the theatre.⁸⁶

The Partello Company returned to the Empire stage in April of 1911 and produced The Blue Mouse,⁸⁷ The Lost Paradise,⁸⁸ Lena Rivers,⁸⁹ Under Two Flags,⁹⁰ The Virginian⁹¹ and The Prodigal Son.⁹²

In January, 1911, the Summers Stock Company took up residence at the Empire. On the whole the critics were well pleased with the productions that this group staged too.⁹³ In reviewing their production of Jane, for example, the Bulletin critic said that "splendid singing and acting combined to make the operetta a great success, and the well filled house dispersed with the feeling of being well satisfied with the evening's enjoyment...."⁹⁴ The Capital's critic felt that in The Bells "the Summers company proved their worth by their splendid hand-

84. Capital, December 30, 1910.

85. Capital, December 20, 1910.

86. Capital, December 20, 1910.

87. Bulletin, March 27, 1911.

88. Bulletin, April 5, 1911.

89. Bulletin, April 7, 1911.

90. Bulletin, April 10, 1911.

91. Bulletin, April 12, 1911.

92. Bulletin, April 14, 1911.

93. A list of the Summers Stock Company's productions is included in Appendix D.

94. Bulletin, January 14, 1911.

ling of the various roles."⁹⁵ He added in a later review that "Since the Summers company opened their engagement in the city, the theatre has been continually well-filled, and the company...evidently one of the most popular that has visited Edmonton for some time."⁹⁶ This popularity was due largely, to be sure, to the overall competence of the acting and staging but also greatly to Mable Summers and William H. Blake.

The company returned to the Empire Theatre in the fall of 1911 apparently stronger than ever.⁹⁷ During this engagement they produced Baby Mine,⁹⁸ The Music Master,⁹⁹ David Harum,¹⁰⁰ The Man from Mexico¹⁰¹ and Lord Chumley.¹⁰²

The Summers troupe made three more appearances in Edmonton before the war. In February, 1912, they produced Ishmael or From the Depths,¹⁰³ The Wrong Mr. Wright and There and Back.¹⁰⁴ The next month saw the performance of Alias Jimmy Valentine, a production which was particularly popular.¹⁰⁵ In fact the play was repeated again during their last en-

95. Capital, January 19, 1911.

96. Capital, January 28, 1911.

97. Bulletin, November 18, 1911.

98. Bulletin, November 18, 1911.

99. Bulletin, December 15, 1911.

100. Bulletin, December 15, 1911.

101. Bulletin, December 9, 1911.

102. Bulletin, December 18, 1911.

103. Bulletin, February 22, 1912.

104. Bulletin, February 22, 1912.

105. Bulletin, March 4, 1912.

gagement in April.¹⁰⁶ At this time the troupe also played in A Gentle-
man from Mississippi,¹⁰⁷ David Harum, Baby Mine and Paid in Full.¹⁰⁸

The Courtney Morgan Stock Company followed the Summers group for a short resident engagement and was the last stock company to play the Empire. This troupe was also popular with audiences and critics. Miss Morgan was an actress of repute having had many years of experience on the stage before coming to Edmonton.¹⁰⁹

The English actor Edward Terry, New York's "hostess" Texas Guinan, and the Kenny-Harvey Company appeared on the Empire stage during the regular run of the Morgan Stock Company. The troupe gave place to Edward Terry and his London Company in February, 1911. Mr. Terry acted in Sweet Lavender and Liberty Hall.¹¹⁰ He played to a crowded house for three nights in both plays. The Bulletin claimed that "As an actor Terry had no equal in Western Canada and...certainly no rival at the Empire Theatre."¹¹¹

The famous musical comedy star, Texas Guinan, performed in The Kissing Girl in March.¹¹² The cast of the play was accentuated by a chorus of sixty-five, its own orchestra and elaborate scenery and costumes.¹¹³ In

 106. Bulletin, April 3, 1912.

107. Bulletin, April 10, 1912.

108. Bulletin, April 15, 1912.

109. Bulletin, February 5, 1911. A list of the plays produced by the Morgan Stock Company is included in Appendix D.

110. Bulletin, February 28, 1911.

111. Bulletin, February 28, 1911.

112. Bulletin, February 16, 1911.

113. Bulletin, March 7, 1911.

fact, during the performance Miss Guinan was bejeweled with \$150,000 worth of genuine blue-white diamonds.¹¹⁴ According to the Bulletin, besides the costly jewels in her rings, some of which were presented to her by royalty and foreign notables on her European tours, Miss Guinan wore one diamond necklace which cost more than \$65,000.¹¹⁵ The cast as a whole was admired: "With Miss Guinan...is a company which is first-class in every detail, The chorus is unusually strong as to voice, and in appearance is undoubtedly the best which has ever appeared in this city."¹¹⁶ Unfortunately, Texas Guinan, herself, was not as impressive as most of the other players:

Miss Guinan is not by any means the best singer in the company. Miss Fitzhugh has a much superior voice and is almost as clever an actress. The singing of Louis London, and the comedy parts taken by Harry Hermsen are exceptionally well done.¹¹⁷

114. Bulletin, March 8, 1911.

115. Bulletin, March 8, 1911.

116. Bulletin, March 10, 1911.

117. Bulletin, March 10, 1911.

Chapter II

The Empire Theatre's Pre-War Years

1911 and 1912

In the spring of 1911 the Empire Theatre changed its policy again and began its fourth and greatest period of entertainment. Until the fall of 1912 the theatre housed a different stage play every three nights almost without a break. The quality of the shows improved somewhat over those produced during the period preceding the stock company era. Furthermore, the old familiar barnstormers no longer came. Most companies were new and usually formed in order to tour one particular New York success. Sometimes the company was composed partly of members of an original cast. It was during this period, too, that Edmonton saw the greatest number of internationally famous actors and actresses. The three years preceding World War I were indeed the heyday of the road companies. "The theatre was seldom dark at any time during 1911, 1912 and 1913. Those were the years in which people were flocking into the country in large numbers...."¹

1911

The sensational musical production of the gay night life in Paris, The Queen of the Moulin Rouge inaugurated this new period of extravagant New York successes.² The promoters of this production claimed that it was the largest musical organization on tour. It included twenty-four musical numbers, Parisian novelties, elaborate costumes, ten massive

1. Watt, Journal, September 26, 1949.

2. Bulletin, April 12, 1911. Edward Terry and Texas Guinan appeared during the run of the Morgan Stock Company. Also, after the last production of the troupe, an amateur, though extravagant production of Alice in Wonderland was staged at the Empire. The play was acted by two hundred fifty Edmonton children to raise funds for the Public Hospital. [Bulletin, March 23, 1911.] The Bulletin wrote that the properties, electrical and calcium effects were beautiful and that this was without doubt one of the most pretentious amateur extravaganzas ever given in the city. [Bulletin, March 30, 1911].

scenes, and indeed, required a special train of five cars to transport it.³ All three Edmonton dailies carried reviews that lavished praise on the extravagance and beauty of the production. The Bulletin said that the whole performance was "bright, snappy, full of interest from start to finish, making an entertainment of unusual merit."⁴ The critic from the Capital was especially impressed with the pantomime presentation of low life in Paris and added that "Elaborate scenery, a full chorus, pretty dresses and good singing contributed to the success of the production."⁵ The Journal's reviewer was also impressed with the pantomime but added that the music and handsome costumes of the other scenes aided greatly in making the whole effect exceedingly striking.⁶

The Queen of the Moulin Rouge was followed by another extravagant production of a musical comedy called Lonesome Town.⁷ The play starred the famous comedian Max Dill and included a cast of fifty people. The Bulletin was quite impressed with Mr. Dill's comedy technique:

His style is especially distinctive. He does not strain to score laughs. He is hilariously funny through the use of quiet, repressive methods. His accent is delicious and unexaggerated, his short, choppy gestures bring a laugh by their admirable simulated awkwardness, his famous goo-goo eyes are wonderfully expressionful.⁸

3. Bulletin, April 12, 1911.

4. Bulletin, April 18, 1911.

5. Capital, April 18, 1911.

6. Journal, April 18, 1911.

7. Bulletin, April 19, 1911.

8. Bulletin, April 20, 1911.

Max Dill and his company returned later in April and held the boards of the Empire with Easy Money.⁹

The next major production to play for three nights at the Empire, was The Squaw Man by the H. E. Pierce Company.¹⁰ This play was presented at the Empire exactly as staged at Wallack's Theatre in New York during the previous two years.¹¹ All reviewers were particularly praiseworthy of the characterizations in the play. The Capital critic wrote that "The various characters were particularly well adapted to the roles they assumed."¹² The Journal reviewer was more specific:

John Julally as Jim is most effective, especially in the Western scenes. He has a good stage appearance, a good voice and he uses these with restraint and judgment, building a strong character. Nan Winters as...the Indian wife...portrays her character almost perfectly. Although she speaks scarcely a dozen words during the play, she leaves a deeper impression on one than any other character.¹³

Echkardt's Ideals appeared next at the Empire with a week's reper-

9. Bulletin, April 28, 1911.

10. Bulletin, May 1, 1911. A variety company from England appeared between the Dill and Pierce companies. The most popular members of this troupe were impersonators Miss Victoria and Frank Bush. Although, according to the Bulletin, the mirth provoked by Mr. Bush at times verged almost upon hysteria, Miss Victoria was not as successful because the low life of London that she mimicked was not familiar to Edmontonians and so lacked something in their appreciation of the inimitable skill and charm she displayed. [Bulletin, May 2, 1911].

11. Bulletin, May 1, 1911.

12. Capital, May 5, 1911.

13. Journal, May 5, 1911.

toire which consisted of A Wicked Woman,¹⁴ Mrs. Temple's Telegram,¹⁵ The Charity Child,¹⁶ Brown's in Town¹⁷ and Are You a Mason?¹⁸ This group was followed by the extravagant pony ballet The Isle of Spice.¹⁹ Audiences appreciated the scintillating color, the elaborate stage settings and the numerous songs of catchy variety.²⁰ However, the Journal came closest to capturing the real value of this and other productions like it when it wrote:

The production is not one that holds to such a pitch wondering what is to happen next and whether the hero will marry the charming heroine, which of course, is always necessary in dramatic plays. But it was one of those entertainments that delight all who are in the theatre. It abounds with witty songs and comic happenings.²¹

This statement was characteristic of the majority of productions during this new era of the theatre in Edmonton. This was a major change from the first decade of the century in which melodrama was the dominant form of entertainment.

The theatre critics in Edmonton recognized the plight of their stage.

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- 14. Bulletin, May 4, 1911.
 - 15. Bulletin, May 5, 1911.
 - 16. Bulletin, May 5, 1911.
 - 17. Bulletin, May 10, 1911.
 - 18. Bulletin, May 13, 1911.
 - 19. Bulletin, May 11, 1911.
 - 20. Bulletin, May 13, 1911.
 - 21. Journal, May 16, 1911.

So when John Griffith was announced in Othello, Faust and The Bells, the Bulletin, wrote:

In these degenerate days of the drama, it is like a ray of sunshine in a clouded sky to hear that a Shakespearean play is announced for a local theatre....²²

Mr. Griffith's name was a familiar one in Edmonton. The Bulletin felt that the true greatness of his acting of Mephisto in Faust was so generally known that comment was unnecessary.²³ In fact, a public canvass earlier had indicated that this play should be substituted for A King's Rival originally intended for production at the Empire.²⁴

The musical extravangza was in fashion, however, and the Griffith company was followed by the production of The Cat and the Fiddle composed of forty singers, dancers, comedians and a large and beautifully gowned chorus.²⁵ Like most of the productions of this nature, there was not much to the play, nor was the music overly bright, "but its full producing powers and new and wonderful stage effects kept the audience going from start to finish."²⁶

A successful production of the serious drama, The Climax, held the boards at the Empire next with Clyde Benson and Leona Stater in the leading roles.²⁷

The month of May closed at a high point with the appearance of the

22. Bulletin, May 19, 1911.

23. Bulletin, May 17, 1911.

24. Bulletin, May 13, 1911.

25. Bulletin, May 16, 1911.

26. Capital, May 26, 1911.

27. Journal, May 23, 1911.

celebrated emotional actress Olga Nethersole. Her first role was the lead in The Redemption of Evelyn Vaudray. The deep emotionalism of her performance was as evident and as appreciated in Edmonton as elsewhere: "Olga Nethersole as an emotional actress has had no equal in Edmonton and her brilliant success...should gauge for all lovers of the highest in art and drama to judge by."²⁸ After the performance of Evelyn Vaudray, a member of the audience was quoted as saying that "If they hadn't come back, smiled and bowed, I would have forgotten that it wasn't real."²⁹ Still, despite the effect, Miss Nethersole did not exude an excess of emotion, for the Capital noted that like any true artist she did not at any place overplay her role even though opportunities for so doing were many.³⁰

Despite her restraint in the above play, Miss Nethersole perhaps projected an excess of passion in her next presentations of The Enigma and Sister Beatrice. Although the critic of the Capital conceded that the characters were well portrayed and that the acting was probably the best seen that year, there was too much emotionalism in each act, with the result that each character was drawn out to a point where he became tiresome.³¹ The critic of the Bulletin was of a different opinion, however, and apparently so was the audience who "...hung upon the play, forgot to applaud...wept without evasion and...went away thinking."³² The reviewer concluded that this was the highest tribute possible to the

28. Bulletin, May 30, 1911.

29. Capital, May 30, 1911.

30. Capital, May 30, 1911.

31. Capital, May 31, 1911.

32. Bulletin, May 31, 1911.

artistic and deeply convincing rendition received from the actress who proved to Edmonton that she merited her international fame.³³

The month of June brought the famous music hall comedian, Albert Chevalier. His, too, was a well-known name in Edmonton. Soon after the announcement of his coming, a great deal of interest and enthusiasm was aroused among theatre-goers in the city.³⁴ The Edmonton dailies, for example, wrote several articles about the man and his art. One of these in the Bulletin stated that Mr. Chevalier was the first great actor of any standing in London to leave the theatre for the music halls, and that his subsequent success was due to the fact that his methods were those of a trained, experienced actor.³⁵

The Bulletin opened its review of Mr. Chevalier's performance with the following statement:

Chevalier on an Edmonton stage -the thought of it five years ago would have been fantastic. Chevalier actually here, with the songs, the vivid impersonations and artistry that have made him famous- is a most delightful and satisfying reality.³⁶

An unusually enthusiastic review followed. The Capital shared these views:

That Chevalier has scored a hit in Edmonton is putting it mildly. His interpretation of the English...characters was received...with possibly the greatest enthus-

33. Bulletin, May 31, 1911.

34. Bulletin, June 2, 1911.

35. Bulletin, May 11, 1911.

36. Bulletin, June 9, 1911.

iasm that has been accorded any performer in this city....Playing to a house, crowded from footlights to box office, Chevalier last night only avoided becoming a permanent resident of Edmonton by having the curtain rung down. Dozens of encores were not sufficient to appease the appetite of his audience....Chevalier had so much difficulty in getting off the stage that it commenced to look as though he would have to go through the most of his programme over again.³⁷

The Lilliputian Opera Company returned for two engagements in June and produced operettas they had previously done in the city such as The Gondoliers and Pinafore.³⁸ Their performances were fully up to the standard set in their previous engagements and they drew record crowds.³⁹

Kate Mortimer and Company graced the boards of the Empire Theatre next with a production of East Lynne. Despite the fact that an advance article in the Bulletin claimed that Miss Mortimer was having one of the most successful seasons of her entire career,⁴⁰ the reviews of the production were not particularly enthusiastic, especially the Journal's:

For the last ten years, East Lynne has been the maxim of every stock company manager in America and...has usually made a flood when a good play could not draw a corporal's guard to a playhouse....A fair sized audience sniffled and wondered last night at the Empire when Kate

37. Capital, June 10, 1911.

38. Bulletin, June 23, 1911.

39. Capital, June 8, 1911; Bulletin, June 5, 1911.

40. Bulletin, June 7, 1911.

Mortimer...went through five acts of the dismal 'English emotional drama' in a more or less commendable fashion. Miss Mortimer handles the part no better, and probably no worse than hundreds of other actresses have done. She 'emoshed' and that is probably all that can be said of the moth-eaten part.⁴¹

The same reviewer noted also that the staging was exceptionally poor with the house scenery used in every act. He criticized, in particular, entrances and exits made via the tormentor, which dispelled all the illusion.⁴²

A play about Alaska, called The Barrier, was produced by the Chapman Company next and only generated slightly more enthusiasm among theatre critics in Edmonton. The general attitude was best characterized by the Capital reviewer who said that the production was very fair and satisfied the audience.⁴³

June saw two more celebrated actors, Willard Mack and Mac Bloom. The former appeared in Cameo Kirby and scored a success with his co-stars, Jeanne Russell and Annie Adams, the mother of Maude Adams. Spectacle returned to the Edmonton stage with this production. An advance article claimed that this was the largest dramatic company that ever toured the Canadian West carrying the complete production of its play including scenery, costumes, electrical effects and even furniture used on the stage.⁴⁴ Each of the actors developed a well-rounded characterization

41. Journal, June 13, 1911.

42. Journal, June 13, 1911.

43. Capital, June 16, 1911.

44. Bulletin, June 13, 1911.

and all in all the company was considered capable.⁴⁵

An even greater spectacle was Max Bloom's production of the musical comedy, A Winning Miss. Launched at the cost of over \$40,000, the play included a company of sixty people including a beauty chorus, novel electrical effects such as a glow worm number, and the passing of a lighted excursion boat on a lake "so realistic that the audience might be led to imagine they were sitting on the quiet bank of some body of water, watching the passing steamer on a pleasant night."⁴⁶ All three papers agreed that the play was "a ripple of laughter and a bunch of fun from the beginning to the end."⁴⁷

Mr. Bloom returned in August with the musical comedy, The Sunny Side of Broadway. Though not as extravagant as the other production, this play also created spectacle such as a wave scene and a rain scene that greatly impressed theatre-goers.⁴⁸

Mr. Bloom's third performance at the Empire in 1911 was in The Telephone Girl. The Bulletin claimed that this was his greatest success.⁴⁹ The Capital agreed that the play "was good for about four laughs a minute besides having some real jokes interspersed as a sort of tobacco to the real performance."⁵⁰

A play that was continually before the public for twenty-five years entertained Edmonton's theatre-goers in July. With exactly the

45. Bulletin, June 21, 1911.

46. Bulletin, June 15, 1911.

47. Journal, June 23, 1911.

48. Bulletin, August 15, 1911.

49. Bulletin, September 30, 1911.

50. Capital, October 6, 1911.

same company and production that toured the United States and played in the big houses of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago, The Old Homestead scored a distinct success. "Splendid scenic effects and almost faultless setting of the various parts, together with a story that in itself would hold the interest of an audience, contributed to the success of the production."⁵¹ Just as important were the actors, who "carried their lines to perfection."⁵²

Another western play, In Wyoming, was produced later the same month by the H. E. Pierce Company and was equally successful.⁵³ However, the most novel feature to excite the Empire's patrons in some time was the Mysterious Willard and the Man of Mystery Company. Mr. Willard was known as the Human Telescope and in full view of the audience, increased his height from seven to nine inches and extended his arms from twelve to fifteen inches.⁵⁴ According to the Bulletin this act was accompanied with sufficient proofs of its genuineness as to convince the most incredulous.⁵⁵ Mr. Willard was a man of many talents, able to hold the boards of the Empire, with changes of programme, for a week.⁵⁶ Besides growing at will, he did sleight of hand, imitations, hypnosis, magic and mind reading.⁵⁷ Mr. Willard's company included Master E. Johnson, the famous lecturer and traveler who delivered some travelogues,

51. Capital, July 7, 1911.

52. Journal, July 7, 1911.

53. Capital, July 25, 1911.

54. Bulletin, July 6, 1911.

55. Bulletin, July 11, 1911.

56. Bulletin, July 8, 1911.

57. Bulletin, July 12, 1911.

and his wife who enlivened the rhetoric with various native songs from the South Sea Islands.⁵⁸

Declared by New York, Chicago and Boston critics as the most novel and diverting play of the season, The Flower of the Ranch was produced at the Empire Theatre for three nights in August.⁵⁹ Accorded a most enthusiastic reception by critics and audiences, the play indulged in spectacle too, illustrating in a most realistic way the typical ranching country of the American west with costumes representing cowboys and cow-girls off the range, giving a picturesque and romantic setting to the play.⁶⁰ The players were good, too, especially Betty Caldwell, "a pretty young miss with all the gracefulness that an actress could command. She had the vim and the energy of the stage life, so far as musical comedy was concerned."⁶¹

Later in August Paul Gilmore appeared in Mummy and the Humming Bird and The Bachelor and received fair reviews,⁶² while a production of Human Hearts later in the month generated only slightly more enthusiasm.⁶³

The boards of the Empire were held for three weeks in September by the Harry St. Clair Company who played a short stock engagement. This company failed to generate any extraordinary amount of excitement but, on the whole, the majority of their productions were acceptable and appreciated. After their last production, the Bulletin critic wrote

58. Bulletin, July 8, 1911.

59. Bulletin, July 13, 1911.

60. Bulletin, August 8, 1911.

61. Journal, August 8, 1911.

62. Bulletin, July 31, 1911; Capital, July 31, 1911.

63. Bulletin, August 11, 1911.

that during their stay they put on nothing but the cleanest and the best of bills.⁶⁴ A unique event in Edmonton's theatrical annals occurred after the performance of The Silver Dagger in which Chas. Jackson, the musical director for the company, and Connie Hallet were united in marriage on the stage in the presence of the audience.⁶⁵

The latter part of September was taken up by The Royal Welsh Ladies Choir,⁶⁶ a production of the musical comedy Forty-Five Minutes from Broadway⁶⁷ and the Lewis and Lake Company's productions of The Tourists⁶⁸ and The Census Taker.⁶⁹ The Bulletin claimed that the latter group was the best singing and dancing chorus travelling that season.⁷⁰

October opened the doors of the Empire Theatre with the first production in Edmonton of In Old Kentucky. The play had previously achieved very great popularity in the United States, England and Australia.⁷¹ Every seat in the theatre was taken long before the performance was to begin.⁷² The play scored a success in the Northwest as well evidenced by the hearty applause which greeted every act. The Bulletin reviewed that the production, which included some very pretty and novel

64. Bulletin, September 18, 1911. A list of the productions by the St. Clair Company is included in Appendix D.

65. Bulletin, August 31, 1911.

66. Bulletin, September 16, 1911 .

67. Capital, September 23, 1911.

68. Bulletin, September 18, 1911.

69. Bulletin, September 19, 1911.

70. Bulletin, September 23, 1911.

71. Bulletin, September 23, 1911.

72. Bulletin, October 3, 1911.

scenery, contained a well-balanced company and exceptionally talented principals.⁷³

After six months of attracting sensational attendances at the New Amsterdam Theatre in New York, Madame Sherry, the season's musical rage on Broadway was produced for three nights in Edmonton. The production was a duplicate in every detail of the original production⁷⁴ and proved exceptionally popular with audiences and critics alike.⁷⁵ The Journal was slightly critical of the scenery which showed the effects of a hard road season, but conceded that the company showed abundant evidence of good team work. The same production played a return engagement at the Empire in December. The Bulletin felt that this fact furnished good proof of the importance of Edmonton as a theatrical centre since less than five weeks elapsed between the two engagements and both experienced record business.⁷⁶

Reviews in the Bulletin and Capital for the second engagement reinforced the Journal's observance of the good work of the company in the first production.⁷⁷

William Blake and the Majestic Stock Company with a car load of scenery and effects satisfied theatre-goers at the Empire during two short stock engagements in October and November.⁷⁸ Mr. Blake was remembered for his performance in The Bells the previous spring and he and

73. Bulletin, October 3, 1911.

74. Bulletin, September 30, 1911.

75. Capital, October 17, 1911.

76. Bulletin, December 1, 1911.

77. Bulletin, December 1, 1911; Capital, December 1, 1911.

78. Bulletin, October 4, 1911.

his company were well received.⁷⁹

The Majestic Stock Company returned for a fourth short engagement in January of 1912. Reviews were slightly more enthusiastic during this run than they were on their previous ones. Reviewing the troupe's production of Granstark, for example, the Bulletin's critic wrote:

The cast of the Majestic Stock Company is particularly well-adapted to the presentation of the drama, the individual members of the company showing up to much better advantage than on their recent visit to Edmonton several weeks ago. Without a doubt last night's production was one of the best which has ever been staged by a stock company in Edmonton.⁸⁰

Later in the run, regarding the production of The Witching Hour, the critic wrote that interest in the company's performances was not waning, that they gave a highly interesting production and that William Blake and his supporting cast continued to do excellent work.⁸¹

The eminent Irish-American actress, Anna Day, visited Edmonton for a two night engagement in the role of Mary Tudor in When Knighthood Was In Flower at the end of October.⁸² Miss Day used this vehicle with marked success for three seasons⁸³ and had received "the praise of critics

79. Bulletin, October 13, 1911. A list of productions by the Majestic Stock Company is included in Appendix D.

80. Bulletin, January 19, 1912.

81. Bulletin, January 25, 1912.

82. Bulletin, October 18, 1911.

83. Bulletin, October 18, 1911.

and plaudits of the press"⁸⁴ wherever she had appeared. She was to receive no less at the pens of the critics in Edmonton, especially the Capital's critic:

Miss Anna Day endeared herself to every person present....

Her work was a revelation to Edmonton theatre-goers for its brilliancy, vivacity and great pathos, which were displayed in turn with the suddenness of a lightning change artist.⁸⁵

Early in August of 1911 there was a rumor that the internationally acclaimed opera singer, Madame Lillian Nordica would not include Edmonton in her tour of the west in December for want of suitable accommodation. Her manager claimed that Thistle Rink was too large and the acoustics too imperfect. He noted that the diva, Madame Melba, was not heard to best advantage there the previous October. The Empire Theatre, he claimed, was too small so that the limited seating capacity would not give Madame Nordica the receipts which other cities obtained at the four dollar price of admission.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, despite the scare given Edmonton opera buffs, it was announced later the same month that Madame Nordica would indeed appear at the Empire Theatre and at a four dollar admission.⁸⁷ The notice was received with great enthusiasm and the Bulletin noted that she was admittedly the greatest concert artist and that no singer had equalled her in the affections of the opera loving public.⁸⁸ The article continued that her acting ability was a great asset as well

84. Bulletin, October 26, 1911.

85. Capital, October 31, 1911.

86. Bulletin, August 3, 1911.

87. Bulletin, August 25, 1911.

88. Bulletin, August 25, 1911.

as her voice, and that she was so strong in dramatic temperament that even without footlights, stage setting and costumes she could bring a whole scene vividly before her auditors.⁸⁹

Her performance in November, however, was not as enthusiastically received as her reputation would have warranted. The music reviewer of the Capital claimed that she was in bad voice. Although her phrasing and management and her dramatic power, were all that could be desired, her transitions from one register to the other were apparent and the break in her voice in the high register was quite noticeable, despite her obvious preparations to conceal it.⁹⁰

The review by the critic of the Bulletin was considerably more enthusiastic. He noted, in contrast to the Capital, that Madame Nordica's appearance was in keeping with her rare artistic ability and indeed that some of her numbers were given with remarkable originality and grace.⁹¹ Perhaps the former critic was in bad humor for the audience was enthralled and persistently called for encores amid the wildest applause.⁹²

The internationally popular actor, Lawrence D'Orsay followed Madame Nordica at the Empire in The Earl of Pawtucket.⁹³ This time the critics agreed as to the merits of the production. D'Orsay was superb as the droll, lovable gentleman trying to pass himself off as an American⁹⁴ so

89. Bulletin, August 25, 1911.

90. Capital, November 2, 1911.

91. Bulletin, November 2, 1911.

92. Bulletin, November 2, 1911.

93. Bulletin, October 26, 1911.

94. Journal, November 3, 1911.

that he "out Englished the English."⁹⁵ It was only after half a dozen curtain calls that he consented to step from his character in the play and address a few words of thanks to the audience for the reception they had given him and his company.⁹⁶ The scenes laid in the Waldorf Astoria were exact reproductions of three different rooms in the hotel⁹⁷ and were of the highest possible quality.⁹⁸ The lighting effects and costumes were also handled well to the most minute detail.⁹⁹

Professor Mental and his Psychic and Mystic Company, pronounced by the press as the greatest psychic worker of the age, returned to the Empire the same month and gave a larger and entirely new production.¹⁰⁰

Jan Kubelik, declared by musical experts to be the violin genius of the age, appeared on the Empire stage in the latter part of November.¹⁰¹ He captured the hearts of the audience that filled the theatre to the doors with the dulcet tones of his \$75,000 Stradivarius.¹⁰² The Bulletin music critic wrote that "His ready sympathy, his mastery of technique,...and his vivid personality all combined to make their effect on his audience."¹⁰³

In addition to a stock engagement by the Summers Company, previously

95. Capital, November 3, 1911.

96. Bulletin, November 3, 1911.

97. Bulletin, October 26, 1911.

98. Capital, November 3, 1911.

99. Journal, November 3, 1911.

100. Bulletin, November 10, 1911.

101. Bulletin, November 6, 1911.

102. Bulletin, November 23, 1911.

103. Bulletin, November 23, 1911.

discussed, and a performance by West's Minstrels,¹⁰⁴ Edmonton audiences saw three major productions at the Empire in December. The first was the New York success, The Right of Way, starring Sanford Dodge.¹⁰⁵ Despite the sensation it produced at Wallack's Theatre,¹⁰⁶ the production was a distinct failure in Edmonton:

It isn't often, more's the pity, that Broadway successes reach Edmonton and the northwest in the freshness of their youth. Sooner or later some of them come, if they are real successes, but 'the original New York production,' of which the managers and the press agents speak so glibly, has never come. In the third or fourth season, perhaps, the success is taken into the west, and may reach Edmonton wayworn and weary, played by a third or fourth company, or perhaps a stock company.

In one of the last classes is the production of 'The Right of Way'....

Mr. Dodge is a disappointment....The leading man is either the victim of an impediment in his speech, or else is suffering from a bad cold. It seems to be an effort for him to speak. He gasps rather than speaks some of his lines, and in the long speeches in which the play abounds it is hard to follow him ten rows back.¹⁰⁷

Sanford Dodge returned to the Empire in May of 1912 and produced The

104. Bulletin, December 19, 1911.

105. Bulletin, December 4, 1911.

106. Bulletin, December 9, 1911.

107. Journal, December 12, 1911.

Right of Way, Faust and The Gladiator.¹⁰⁸ Despite the fact that scenically the productions were splendid,¹⁰⁹ especially The Gladiator which showed a burning of a church,¹¹⁰ and Faust which showed the vision of Marguerite, the wine cup of fire, the illuminated cross, the electrical garden, the invocation of the demons by fire, the electrical sword fight the illuminated skulls and the rain of fire,¹¹¹ Mr. Dodge again failed to score a success by his acting. Although he was seen to much better advantage in The Gladiator than the other plays and even rose to heights in the emotional scenes, he still lacked the voice to make his parts entirely convincing.¹¹²

The year 1911 ended at the Empire with a performance by the Castle Square Entertainers, a variety company of instrumentalists and vocalists,¹¹³ and a production of the pastoral comedy, Our New Minister.¹¹⁴ Both productions were fairly well received.

108. Bulletin, May 9, 1912.

109. Bulletin, May 7, 1912.

110. Bulletin, May 10, 1912.

111. Bulletin, May 14, 1912.

112. Journal, May 14, 1912.

113. Bulletin, December 27, 1911.

114. Bulletin, December 29, 1911.

1912

The eminent English comedian, C. James Bancroft, got 1912 off to a rousing start with his production of The Private Secretary. He had previously played the lead in this play over two thousand times, and the company with which he surrounded himself at the Empire was the same that had won unanimous approval in Great Britain.¹ The comedian played to crowded houses and the Bulletin claimed that the company was the best of its kind that had visited Edmonton since Edward Terry came several months before. The audiences were delighted and nothing but praise was heard.² In fact, in an article regarding Mr. Bancroft's second engagement in Edmonton, the Bulletin's critic said that the actor's role in The Private Secretary would live as long as the English and American stages.³ Mr. Bancroft's vehicle on the second appearance in March was The New Boy. He was just as successful in this production having the happy faculty of knowing just what his audiences wanted and never overplaying. His facial expressions were particularly amusing and upon them he depended for the larger part of his comedy.⁴

A favorite Canadian actor, Clifford Lane Bruce, appeared with the Till Company in The Thief later in January.⁵ After four years as a leading man for major productions in the United States including those of David Belasco, Mr. Bruce chose the lead in The Thief as his vehicle

1. Bulletin, December 27, 1911.

2. Bulletin, January 2, 1912.

3. Bulletin, March 1, 1912.

4. Bulletin, March 1, 1912.

5. Bulletin, January 17, 1912.

and scored his biggest success.⁶ The success of the play in Edmonton was instantaneous. Although there were only half a dozen actors in the cast each was a finished performer.⁷ The dailies, however, were more absorbed in the quality of the play itself rather than in its presentation. The Bulletin's critic wrote that the play should be played in every city in the country because of the lesson it taught to husbands.⁸ The Capital's reviewer wrote that the play

...is one of the few serious presentations of the present season which have merited generous patronage, dealing with a problem which has become the subject of frequent dramatic treatment since the influence of 'Ibsenism' first gave the new tendency to the European and American stage....The heaviest drama and the most important of any that have been produced in Edmonton since Olga Nethersole's appearance here.⁹

Tom Marks and his company returned for a week's engagement in February and were again affectionately welcomed in Edmonton.¹⁰ Their productions were The Irish Detective, The Hypocrite, Cinderella and Jerry the Tramp.¹¹

Eighteenth century comedy made one of its rare appearances in Edmonton when William Yule returned to the Empire stage with Sheridan's

6. Bulletin, January 18, 1912.

7. Bulletin, January 19, 1912.

8. Bulletin, January 15, 1912.

9. Capital, January 19, 1912.

10. Bulletin, January 23, 1912.

11. Bulletin, February 1, 1912.

The Rivals.¹² That Edmonton's critics missed the classics was evident when the Bulletin's drama critic wrote:

In these days of musical comedy it is good occasionally to have the opportunity of seeing one of the classic comedies upon which the stage has risen to its present security. Of course, musical comedy is refreshing and charming in its way, but it lacks the inherent wit and humor which marks such comedies as 'The Rivals,' 'She Stoops to Conquer,' 'The School for Scandal' and other similar famous plays.¹³

The Rivals was well done in all respects: "Mr. Yule, with his peculiar talent for character comedy, was without doubt most happily cast as the lumbering, self-satisfied, yet withal cowardly country bumpkin, Bob Acres...."¹⁴ Also, "One of the best features of the production is the costuming, which, to use a much abused term, is really gorgeous. Both the costumes and the excellent scenery of the production look fresh and are in every respect quite adequate."¹⁵

One of the highlights of the theatrical season in Edmonton in 1912 was the appearance of Johnstone Forbes-Robertson in The Passing of the Third Floor Back.¹⁶ The theatre was crowded to the doors to see "the greatest actor that England or probably the world, has today..."¹⁷ wrote the Journal. The Edmonton newspapers were most impressed with

12. Bulletin, January 29, 1912.

13. Bulletin, February 6, 1912.

14. Bulletin, February 6, 1912.

15. Journal, February 6, 1912.

16. Bulletin, January 29, 1912.

17. Journal, February 9, 1912.

the genuiness of Forbes-Robertson's characterization and with the magnetism which he displayed on stage, thus powerfully projecting his characterization to the audience.¹⁸

Forbes-Robertson was also an actor with "a wonderfully impressive delivery, so that every syllable of his perfect enunciation was distinctly audible in every part of the theatre."¹⁹ All critics were impressed with the whole cast too "which was well balanced in every way from the rich grand dame to the slavey who toils in the scullery day in and day out...."²⁰ In fact, the Journal noted that one of the most admirable features of the production was "the self-effacement of the individual and the satisfactory attainment of harmonious ensemble pictures, carried several times in the furtherance of naturalness, to the point of speaking upstage or away from the audience."²¹ All in all, the performance looked at from all its aspects, was "nothing short of ideal."²²

The All-Star English Company had the difficult task of following Forbes-Robertson on the stage of the Empire Theatre in February. The troupe played two three-night engagements and, nevertheless, was quite successful. Their first production was With Edged Tools²³ and the second, Leah Kleschna.²⁴ The company's appearance was noteworthy because this was the first time that an original troupe had been brought over in

18. Bulletin, February 9, 1912; Capital, February 9, 1912; Journal, February 9, 1912.

19. Bulletin, February 9, 1912.

20. Capital, February 9, 1912.

21. Journal, February 9, 1912.

22. Journal, February 9, 1912.

23. Bulletin, February 9, 1912.

24. Bulletin, February 20, 1912.

a body from England.²⁵ Although the company was appreciated in the first play,²⁶ they were considerably better in Leah Kleschna. In fact, this production was a personal triumph for three members of the company, Marie Leonard, Hamilton Deane and Stanley Bedwell.²⁷

The last production in February was Dear Old Billy with the comedian, William Hawtrey in the lead role. The performance was considered a highly meritorious one,²⁸ fussy and funny.²⁹ However, it was Mr. Hawtrey who was responsible almost entirely for its success. "Without Mr. Hawtrey's finished and fetching character work it is doubtful whether the farce would prove much of a success,"³⁰ wrote the Journal's critic.

Considered by many to be the greatest American actor of the age,³¹ Robert Mantell thrilled Edmonton audiences with his performances in four plays at the Empire Theatre in March of 1912. On the opening night he held spellbound for two hours an over-flowing house with his inimitable King Lear.³² Even more than Forbes-Robertson, Mr. Mantell's stage magnetism was overwhelming:

Mr. Mantell as King Lear has a magnetic influence over his audience. He absolutely commands attention and his power of speech coupled with the voice of an old man in anger and

25. Bulletin, February 9, 1912.

26. Bulletin, February 22, 1912.

27. Journal, February 23, 1912

28. Bulletin, February 20, 1912.

29. Journal, February 20, 1912.

30. Journal, February 20, 1912.

31. Bulletin, February 27, 1912.

32. Capital, March 15, 1912.

sympathy is delightful to hear.³³

The Bulletin agreed that "Even in the earliest scenes...where sympathy is least easy, he grasped forcibly the attention of the audience."³⁴

To the character of the mad monarch, he gave a haunting depth and beauty: "He hedged it in with silence and sorrow, and in his raving mad eyes and voice and the inflection of a word one saw the sorrow that shadowed him."³⁵

The characterization was meticulous in its accuracy too:

At first he is so palpably weak, mistaken and headstrong that the sympathies of the spectators bid fair to be alienated. It is only as the play proceeds, as woe accumulates on woe that the genius of the dramatist turns the attention marvellously from the more repellent features of the character, and turns the sentiment not very remote from contempt into one of the most poignant pity.³⁶

It was this delicacy of interpretation, then, a sort of subdued but very fine characterization that impressed Edmonton's critics. The Bulletin noted:

...it was undoubtedly in the tremendous third act...and in the last ineffably patriotic scenes of his recognition of Cordelia and his death by her side, that the emotional powers and the delicacy of interpretation were manifest, which have given him a foremost place among American players.³⁷

33. Capital, March 15, 1912.

34. Bulletin, March 15, 1912.

35. Journal, March 15, 1912.

36. Bulletin, March 15, 1912.

37. Bulletin, March 15, 1912.

Nevertheless, Mr. Mantell was not loath to display raging passion and unbridled emotionalism on the stage when called for, either: "His denunciation of Goneril was a masterly exhibition of declamatory passion, his disillusionment in regard to the equally heartless Regan, gave a further striking proof of this quality."³⁸

Despite his great power on the stage, Mr. Mantell's production still maintained some semblance of ensemble playing. "The production was by no means a one-man show. The cast was, generally speaking, a good one and fairly well balanced."³⁹ The daughters were impersonated by Genevieve Hampen, Agnes Scott and Miss Wakeman. As the Earl of Gloster and the Earl of Kent, Alfred Hastings and John Burke were also successful.⁴⁰

The careful regard for detail in characterization for which Mr. Mantell was well-known was evident in his role of Richelieu as well:

In Mr. Mantell's interpretation of the part a certain vein of whimsical humor ran through the character of the French churchman. In the company of his hanger-on...he is something of a practical joker. And where Wolsey's fall was final and complete, Richelieu retrieves himself and is shown at the curtain fall as standing triumphant in the midst of his enemies to witness the victory of intellect over the crude treachery of the courtier.⁴¹

Robert Mantell's third performance at the Empire was as Macbeth.

38. Bulletin, March 15, 1912.

39. Bulletin, March 15, 1912.

40. Journal, March 15, 1912.

41. Capital, March 16, 1912.

Again his characterization was constantly changing, minute and accurate. It had been his endeavor in this character, as in those previously, to retain the human note, to make Macbeth believable as a man struggling in the grip of fate.⁴²

Mr. Mantell's Macbeth was an intellectual achievement, a triumph over all defects of unheroic stature and a lack of a rough and militant physique. The gradual breaking down of the man's moral fibre as one crime leads to another, Mr. Mantell connoted with singular success, until in the final scenes he appears with pallid face, and hair turned gray by guilty sleeplessness -a neurotic wreck. Having held himself strictly in reserve in the earlier scenes, Mr. Mantell was able to give to the final picture of the tyrant driven to bay, fighting desperately in the assurance that no man born of woman could overcome him, a pictorial intensity that was highly effective.⁴³

Robert Mantell played Shylock in The Merchant of Venice as his last production in Edmonton in 1912. His interpretation created a Shylock who was a bitterly suffering, enraged and malicious Jew:

He was the Shylock of hate and vindictiveness. Reading the play, this seems the rational interpretation, though there have been Shylocks, of which Sir Henry Irving was one, who brought tears of sympathy to the eyes and wrung the hearts of his audience until they despised every

42. Journal, March 17, 1912.

43. Journal, March 17, 1912.

Christian in the play.⁴⁴

In an advance article prior to his first apperance in Edmonton, the Bulletin exposed Mr. Mantell's philosophy regarding stage settings:

If Shakespeare is to be staged at all, it must be upon an elaborate scale. In the old days the staging was inadequate and now to give a true setting to any play, it costs from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars.⁴⁵

Coupled with several articles describing the elaborate stage settings that accompanied his productions, Edmonton audiences were expecting spectacle that exceeded anything yet seen in the city. Unfortunately due to the small size of the Empire stage, none of Mr. Mantell's best scenery could be used for King Lear. Six scenes that required complete changes of scenery were shown by one single wood drop which was a house property and in only three scenes besides these was the equipment adequate.⁴⁶

What defects there were in staging Macbeth were amply made up for in detail of costuming,⁴⁷ and for The Merchant of Venice Mr. Mantell managed to pack enough of his scenery on the Empire stage to finally impress the critics. According to the Journal, each setting was expressive and rich, the long stretch of Venetian canal, the court room in the ducal palace, Portia's garden and the cool moonlit scene at the last.⁴⁸

The month of March also saw Gus Forbes and his company perform in

44. Journal, March 16, 1912.

45. Bulletin, March 4, 1912.

46. Journal, March 16, 1912.

47. Journal, March 17, 1912.

48. Journal, March 1, 1912.

Man on the Box.⁴⁹ Mr. Forbes exuded a great deal of sex appeal and made "the weaker sex fall to his arrow."⁵⁰ Both he and his co-star, Corrine Cantwell, were very good in their roles.⁵¹ Mr. Forbes and his company returned later the same month and put on Arizona. Again he played the young hero and again he was successful.⁵² An important feature of this company was their excellent ensemble playing. Although Mr. Forbes was a master of making his own acting stand out powerfully, he did not do so at the expense of the remainder of the company.⁵³ In April, Gus Forbes returned and produced The Regeneration.⁵⁴

After a brief absence, the musical extravaganza returned to the boards of the Empire in Henry Woodruff and Company's The Prince of Tonight. Everything was against Mr. Woodruff's chances of achieving success from the first. The train on which he arrived was late. When it did get in, hotel accommodations were inadequate. The scenery was considerably later than usual in arriving at the theatre, and when it did arrive, the stage was found to be too small to accommodate the sets. The result was much fitting and curtailment of certain props to adapt the scenic effects to the stage. Throughout the action the chorus had difficulty in moving about, and in the dancing numbers the large company was cramped at all times.⁵⁵

49. Bulletin, March 13, 1912.

50. Capital, March 19, 1912.

51. Capital, March 19, 1912.

52. Bulletin, March 26, 1912.

53. Bulletin, March 26, 1912.

54. Bulletin, April 1, 1912.

55. Journal, March 22, 1912.

Despite all these difficulties, however, the show made a great hit, even though the plot was incidental and all the attractions visual.⁵⁶

The Journal wrote that the production was:

...light and frivolous and pretty, with plenty of sparkle and tinkle. There was moonshine throughout the action, and the songs were 'mooney.'⁵⁷

The Bulletin added that The Prince of Tonight

gave the authors an opportunity to introduce a number of pretty songs, snappy and witty lines, grotesque dances, lovely girls, an excellent male chorus, a wealth of beautiful scenery, attractive costumes and everything else that went to make up one of the best of musical comedies.⁵⁸

April brought the successful New York comedy, The Girl from Rectors. The company which appeared to be without a name was given a warm welcome at the Empire.⁵⁹ This troupe was well balanced but the burden of the acting fell upon Katherine Raynor, who portrayed a double part very well,⁶⁰ and Richard Shaughnessey, who was only sufficient for the occasion.⁶¹

Another celebrity who made a visit to Edmonton in the spring of 1912 was Canadian-born Margaret Anglin. She appeared in the comedy Green

56. Capital, March 22, 1912.

57. Journal, March 22, 1912.

58. Bulletin, March 11, 1912.

59. Bulletin, April 5, 1912.

60. Capital, April 5, 1912.

61. Bulletin, April 5, 1912.

Stockings after also starring in the successful run in New York.⁶² Miss Anglin was conceded to be one of Canada's and America's greatest actresses. Her selection of comedy in Green Stockings, however, was a change from the emotional roles in which she had achieved her early fame.⁶³ The company supporting Miss Anglin included two well-known English players, H. Reeves Smith and Wilfred Draycott, besides Maude Granger, one of America's best known and most popular character actresses.⁶⁴

Despite the fact that Miss Anglin gained her reputation as a tragedienne, she conquered an enthusiastic capacity audience at the Empire with her "delightful little mannerisms, combined with a voice of marvellous flexibility and attractive face and figure."⁶⁵

Miss Nobody from Starland, perhaps the most successful musical extravaganza of the season in Edmonton, succeeded Miss Anglin on the Empire stage in April. The Capital's drama critic wrote that without indulging in exaggerations, the production was about the best evening's enjoyment produced at the Empire all year.⁶⁶ The show was excellent in all respects. The Journal claimed that no musical comedy had come to Edmonton during the last year with such a competent cast. Miss Olive Vail was the star and delighted Edmonton's audiences with her beautiful voice and chic little person.⁶⁷ "...one might well indulge in an Irishism," wrote the Capital's reviewer, "and say that the performance was starless yet full of stars...."

62. Bulletin, April 3, 1912.

63. Bulletin, April 3, 1912.

64. Bulletin, April 16, 1912.

65. Capital, April 19, 1912.

66. Capital, April 23, 1912.

67. Journal, April 23, 1912.

The principals divided the honors equally."⁶⁸ Even so Miss Vail's work was slightly overshadowed by Bertee Beaumont who "besides giving a good impersonation of an Italian woman, had a good voice, and her dancing was a revelation."⁶⁹ Unusual to most musical comedy companies, the chorus was attractive and sang and danced well.⁷⁰

A play that had aroused more comment among critics and theatregoers than any dramatic offering for many seasons, occupied the boards next at the Empire Theatre.⁷¹ The play was The White Sister and starred Jeanne Towler. According to the Bulletin, after some conjecture a statement was issued by the Catholic Church which stated that the play was based entirely upon fact, that Catholics would enjoy it, and that Miss Towler's characterization of the Nun was beyond reproach.⁷²

Edmonton apparently was of the same opinion regarding the play. The Capital reported that The White Sister embodied the Catholic spirit and made that spirit intelligible to the Protestant mind.⁷³ The critics were not in agreement, however, regarding the production merits of the play. Both the Bulletin's and the Capital's reviewers felt that Miss Towler played the part with sincerity and conviction, while Vernon Wallace, her co-star, was convincing in his characterization too.⁷⁴ The Journal's

68. Capital, April 23, 1912.

69. Journal, April 23, 1912.

70. Bulletin, April 23, 1912.

71. Bulletin, April 22, 1912.

72. Bulletin, April 22, 1912.

73. Capital, April 26, 1912.

74. Bulletin, April 26, 1912; Capital, April 26, 1912.

critic, however, wrote that Miss Towler always suggested the woman rather than the sister of the convent. Also, several times during the action of the piece, she attempted to dominate the scene, but lacking the power, she gave the audience the impression that cues had been missed and some of the members of the company were responsible for stage waits. Her characterization had lacked real depth. The review added that Vernon Wallace did not exhibit the virility of a fiery young lover in his role and that some other characters enunciated badly.⁷⁵

Elsie Janis, the most popular musical comedy actress on the continent⁷⁶ appeared on the Empire stage in May. The Slim Princess which she presented was one of her outstanding successes.⁷⁷ The Bulletin reported that the advance sale for the show was one of the largest on record, and on opening night Miss Janis played to a crowded house. "For a long time those who heard her will remember her delightful acting and exquisitely graceful dancing."⁷⁸ The article continued that the latter was like the Greek in its simplicity, yet perfectly interpreting the emotion of the character. However, it was her acting that revealed the secret of her success. According to the Bulletin, her impersonations of Ethel Barrymore, Sarah Bernhardt and Eddie Foy were wonderfully like the originals. Every little mannerism was produced and emphasized with telling effect.⁷⁹ The other principals as well as the chorus, were also praised for their

75. Journal, April 26, 1912.

76. Watt, Journal, September 26, 1949.

77. Ibid.

78. Bulletin, May 6, 1912.

79. Bulletin, May 6, 1912.

work.⁸⁰

Edmonton theatre-goers had a brief change from the usual fare of musical comedy when the boards were held at the Empire by Barnum the Hypnotist. Barnum was not as successful as he might have been had he eliminated some features that made his show a trifle coarse. The Bulletin complained that legitimate fun did not demand that cripples, both bodily and mentally, be dragged into any performance. Nor was it necessary to allow men to undress on the stage any more than the law would allow them if they were in the street or any other public place. The article admitted, though, that Barnum could entertain and no one, after seeing some of his hypnotic acts, would doubt that.⁸¹

The Great McEwen returned to the Edmonton stage later the same month. His production was a great improvement over that of his predecessor because it was of a good, wholesome character.⁸² His many demonstrations of hypnotism and magic were indeed superior to those of Barnum and well warranted the great success he had in the United States before touring the Canadian west.⁸³

May Robson continued the success of The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary at the Empire for three nights in May⁸⁴ after one of the most successful engagements at Terry's Theatre, London, where she appeared for six

80. Bulletin, May 6, 1912.

81. Bulletin, April 30, 1912.

82. Bulletin, May 7, 1912.

83. Bulletin, May 6, 1912.

84. Bulletin, May 7, 1912.

months continuously.⁸⁵ Miss Robson was noted for the naturalness with which she portrayed the comical character in the play and the whole cast was praised for their excellent support.⁸⁶ Her second production of the engagement was A Night Out in which she had the opportunity to display her talents as an impersonator of eccentric characters. She did so excellently, passing from the ludicrously funny to the tenderly pathetic, alternating this genuine humor with pathos so that she captivated and held her audience with intense interest.⁸⁷

The Empire Theatre's next offering proved to be one of its biggest failures. Advance articles claimed that Three Weeks had early gained the reputation of being very naughty⁸⁸ thus becoming one of the most widely discussed plays of recent years.⁸⁹ The notice added that the management had provided a most excellent company for the tour of the play.⁹⁰ However, Edmonton's theatre critics were unimpressed. The Journal's review summed up admirably the general attitude:

'I am only a poor, weak woman.' says the Queen of Sardalia, in 'Three Weeks'....If she had substituted 'Three Weeks' for the personal pronoun and 'play' for 'woman' everything would have been lovely. But it wasn't.

In dramatizing the prurient novel, which was one of the 'six worst smellers' about three years ago, Elinor Glyn had

85. Bulletin, May 7, 1912.

86. Capital, May 17, 1912; Bulletin, May 17, 1912.

87. Bulletin, May 18, 1912.

88. Bulletin, May 18, 1912.

89. Bulletin, May 16, 1912.

90. Bulletin, May 16, 1912.

made a flat, inane play out of a novel that was not as naughty as it was utterly stupid. The dramatization is dull and uninteresting throughout and abounds in talk, talk and more talk without any action worth mentioning. Several of the stage pictures are badly grouped and the entire production had the appearance of being exploited to pique the curiosity of those who have read the underserving book.

The company presenting 'Three Weeks' is just about in keeping with the merits of the play.⁹¹

The scenery in the play was one redeeming feature, however,⁹² and some of the scenes made pretty pictures with the gaily dressed characters placed here and there with "careful carelessness."⁹³

A play called The White Squaw which purported to show the American Indian as he really was⁹⁴ held the boards next at the Empire. More interest, however, was created by the props than the play's content. A gun carried by Jacques Cartier in the play was once actually owned by Chief Pontiac, and the watch used by another character was once carried in the War of 1812 by Colonel Kingsbury.⁹⁵

The last production in May at the Empire was the old-fashioned melodrama, Jesse James. The adventures of the hero and his lady love

91. Journal, May 21, 1912.

92. Journal, May 21, 1912.

93. Bulletin, May 21, 1912.

94. Bulletin, May 23, 1912.

95. Bulletin, May 26, 1912.

pleased the crowds immensely:

Biff, Bang, Bing and then Bing, Bang, Biff....Gun powder, red fire, thrilling escapes, desperate battles, desperadoes and bad men generally...was the savory dish of real old-fashioned melodrama that kept the big audience sitting up straight in their seats the whole time.⁹⁶

The Journal's critic, however, was not quite as gullible. He wrote: The whole bill was one blamed gun shot after another, and when that is said all is said. So far as the company presenting 'Jesse James' is concerned, the less said the better. None of the members of the organization is worse than another, however. The multitudinous scenes supposed to be necessary for a melodrama indicate very strongly that 'house' scenery is quite the fashion this week.⁹⁷

The same company returned later in June and produced another western melodrama, A Texas Ranger.⁹⁸ Again the audience was delighted with the numerous encounters in which pistols and fistcuffs played a prominent part.⁹⁹ Although there was room for improvement in most of the characters, the performances, for a wild west melodrama, were considerably improved over the last production.¹⁰⁰

96. Bulletin, May 31, 1912.

97. Journal, May 31, 1912.

98. Journal, June 18, 1912.

99. Bulletin, June 18, 1912.

100. Journal, June 18, 1912.

June brought a fairly successful production of Over Night starring Arthur Aylesworth¹⁰¹ followed by the more popular Bunty Pulls the Strings. A special company of Scottish players was selected for the Canadian tour of Bunty Pulls the Strings¹⁰² and pulled them so successfully at the Empire Theatre that "a good sized audience laughed for several hours."¹⁰³ It was the special Scottish brand of humor that gave the play its success. The Bulletin's drama critic wrote that the Scottish dialect, the quaint costumes, the hoop skirts of the women and especially the charming Highland scenes combined in this effort. He added that the humor of the lines was a real and refreshing change from the general run of farce comedy that needed ridiculous antics to help it out.¹⁰⁴ All critics were particularly impressed with Molly McIntyre whose sunny face, as the Journal's critic put it, beamed out over every situation with an optimism that was refreshing to the last degree.¹⁰⁵

One of the feature attractions of the theatrical season was the appearance of one of the world's greatest boxers, Bob Fitzsimmons in A Flight for Love.¹⁰⁶ As was probably expected, the play was a poor melodrama, built around Mr. Fitzsimmons in order to give him an opportunity to exhibit his skill with the punching bag.¹⁰⁷ Although the boxer sur-

101. Bulletin, May 29, 1912.

102. Bulletin, May 29, 1912.

103. Bulletin, June 7, 1912.

104. Bulletin, June 7, 1912.

105. Journal, June 7, 1912.

106. Bulletin, June 11, 1912.

107. Journal, June 14, 1912.

prisingly demonstrated some histrionic ability,¹⁰⁸ the supporting company, according to the Journal, could hardly have been worse. None of them knew their lines, and one or two members even pitched their impersonations "in the wrong key."¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, the scenery appeared fresh¹¹⁰ which was unusual for most touring companies by the time they reached Edmonton. In addition some of the scenes were well handled, among them one in which Mr. Fitzsimmons made a real horse-shoe at a real forge on stage, and another in which he fought a battle in a ring which looked real and gave him a chance to do some excellent sparring.¹¹¹

Constance Crawley, one of the best known of England's younger actresses, made her first appearance in Edmonton in The Broken Law late in June.¹¹² The play was one of the last written by Oscar Wilde under the title of Mr. and Mrs. Daventry.¹¹³ The plot which dealt with the injustice of the English divorce laws, was really quite threadbare, according to the Bulletin, but the play was still worth seeing for the clever acting of Miss Crawley and her company. "It was a real pleasure," wrote the reviewer, "to see a company that could produce a drama in which human passions were seen in strong and free play, giving the audience all the emotional interest it wanted, without having to resort to screeching and scratching of faces."¹¹⁴

108. Bulletin, June 14, 1912.

109. Journal, June 14, 1912.

110. Journal, June 14, 1912.

111. Bulletin, June 14, 1912.

112. Bulletin, June 24, 1912.

113. Bulletin, June 28, 1912.

114. Bulletin, June 28, 1912.

Constance Crawley and her English Players returned to the Empire stage in July and produced Pinero's The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. The Bulletin noted that Miss Crawley strongly resembled Mrs. Patrick Campbell, who won much of her fame playing the lead role in the play.¹¹⁵ Again Miss Crawley was praised for her ability to display emotion and inner depth without effort. The Journal recorded that "Few women of the stage can reveal utter weariness, ennui, poignant emotion, startled fear, aroused passion, so pictorially as Miss Crawley does by the mere pose of her body, the expression of her face, the eloquence of her hands."¹¹⁶

Her third role at the Empire was in the comedy The Marriage of Kitty.¹¹⁷ The Capital wrote that her presentation of the leading role in the play was irresistible. According to the Capital's critic, the comedy was one of the most laughable ever put before the footlights and kept the audience in a continuous state of merriment from the beginning of the performance to the end.¹¹⁸ In September, Miss Crawley and her company returned for a double engagement of six nights and acted in The Late Mr. Costello and Sowing the Wind.¹¹⁹

The first production at the Empire Theatre in July was the play Beverly starring the well-known actress Dorothy Howard.¹²⁰ The play was much talked of in Edmonton before its production, not so much for its inherent quality but rather because of the new fad which it had generated.

115. Bulletin, July 5, 1912.

116. Journal, July 9, 1912.

117. Bulletin, July 18, 1912.

118. Capital, July 23, 1912.

119. Bulletin, August 31, 1912.

120. Bulletin, June 7, 1912.

In the spring of 1911, the Beverly Hat had become a fashion craze and the Bulletin wrote that women had "gone crazy" over its beauties.¹²¹ Inevitably the play opened in Edmonton to a crowded house. Although the audience enjoyed the play, the reviewer wrote that there were very few thrills over the dramatic situations which seemed to lack virility. Dorothy Howard was only "pleasing."¹²²

The Viennese operetta, The Spring Maid, starring Mizzi Hajos brought color and spectacle back to the Empire stage later in July. Musically, the play was considered superior to the average modern opera written on the American continent.¹²³ However, the Bulletin took exception to the execution of the musical numbers:

While the songs are superb, their singing might be vastly improved. The principals are excellent, but the chorus is a disappointment. The attack is very uncertain and one is doubtful if the choruses are intended to be sung in unison or as round-de-lays.¹²⁴

Nevertheless, the production was exciting in its spectacle,¹²⁵ and Mizzi Hajos, the star, captivated the audience with her sweet voice and her chic, coquettish manners.¹²⁶ Despite its few faults, the Bulletin critic admitted that The Spring Maid was by far one of the best offerings of the

121. Bulletin, June 15, 1912.

122. Bulletin, July 2, 1912.

123. Capital, July 5, 1912; Bulletin, July 5, 1912.

124. Bulletin, July 5, 1912.

125. Bulletin, July 5, 1912.

126. Capital, July 5, 1912.

year at the Empire.¹²⁷

One of the stage's best known comedians, Harry Bulger, graced Edmonton audiences with his production of The Flirting Princess the following week.¹²⁸ The Bulletin noted that this was "just the right sort of bright and breezy musical show to visit in midsummer, when one's chief desire is to be amused without any effort on the part of the 'amusee.'"¹²⁹ Both the Journal and Bulletin agreed that the comedy parts of the principals were exceptionally strong in this production, and that unlike The Spring Maid, the chorus was the best seen in the city for some time. Particularly successful in The Flirting Princess were several novelty numbers which included "The Oogle Dance," "The Egyptian Turkey Trot" and "Joys and Glooms Song."¹³⁰

One of the best variety shows that "anyone can see anywhere"¹³¹ opened a week's engagement at the Empire Theatre in the middle of July. The most popular member of the troupe was the magician, Albin, who was able to display a completely different set of magic each night of his engagement. The company included xylophone players, the Avolos; story teller and mimic, Tom Brantford; ventriloquist, Colby and many others. So enthusiastic was the Bulletin's critic that he felt no compunction about writing that the show "by long odds was the best night's entertainment that had been seen in Edmonton since the year one."¹³² The company

127. Bulletin, July 5, 1912.

128. Bulletin, July 12, 1912,

129. Bulletin, July 12, 1912.

130. Bulletin, July 12, 1912.

131. Bulletin, July 16, 1912.

132. Bulletin, July 16, 1912.

returned for another successful week in August.¹³³

Edmontonians were also entertained in July by an exceptionally successful production of the play Kindling, starring Margaret Illington. She was an unusually talented actress and with only a minimum of sets and costumes scored a great hit among audiences used to a great deal of spectacle. Miss Illington's great talent was further attested to by the Polish actress Modjeska, who, after seeing her as Lady Macbeth, bestowed upon her mantels and robes that she had used in several of Shakespeare's plays.¹³⁴ The flattering press notices that preceded her advent to Edmonton did not overestimate her ability as an actress as far as the city's critics were concerned. They all agreed that seldom had a character been more convincingly played than Miss Illington's portrayal of the wife of a stevedore in the stifling conditions of a New York tenement.¹³⁵ Audiences were greatly moved, too, and the Capital's critic wrote that seldom was an actress received with so much applause as Miss Illington was accorded after every act of her production.¹³⁶ The Journal concluded that "A more consistent and conscientious study of womankind stunted and made brutish by ignorance, poverty and suffering could not well be imagined."¹³⁷

As was the case for a number of years, August saw a slight decrease

133. Bulletin, August 3, 1912.

134. Bulletin, July 22, 1912.

135. Bulletin, July 22, 1912.

136. Capital, July 26, 1912.

137. Journal, July 26, 1912.

in the number of entertainments at the Empire. In addition to return engagements of Albin and Constance Crawley, previously discussed, those patrons that attended the theatre during this hot month saw a successful production of The Girl, the Man and the Game, starring Billy Clifford.¹³⁸

138. Bulletin, August 31, 1912.

Chapter III

The Empire Theatre's Orpheum Bills
of 1913

After Constance Crawley's performance in Sowing the Wind in September of 1912, the Empire Theatre was placed on the Orpheum Circuit.¹ As a result its production policy changed again. For the next year the theatre presented a double programme each week. The first three playing nights of the week, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were devoted to vaudeville. Thursday, Friday and Saturday were reserved either for drama, musical comedy, special events such as prominent musical artists or well-known magicians and sometimes special motion pictures. Each part of the programme was changed weekly, and all acts were supplied by the Orpheum Circuit.²

The world famous contralto, Madame Schumann-Heink, sang at the Empire Theatre in September. Her fame had, of course, preceded her to Edmonton and it was to a crowded house that she delivered one of the most perfect vocal programmes to be seen in the city.³ Later in the month, theatre patrons saw successful but not outstanding productions of The White Slave,⁴ The Old Homestead⁵ and The Heartbreakers.⁶ The first two productions were serious plays that had played the various American circuits for a number of years, while the latter was a moderately popular musical comedy from Broadway. Also in September, the Juvenile Bostonians returned on their eighth annual tour and acted in Dream Girl and Olivette with their usual

1. Bulletin, September 2, 1912.

2. The vaudeville programmes of the Orpheum Circuit at the Empire Theatre from September 16, 1912 to December 29, 1913 have been reproduced from microfilmed copies of the Bulletin and arranged chronologically in Appendix C.

3. Bulletin, September 20, 1912; Capital, September 20, 1912.

4. Bulletin, August 31, 1912.

5. Bulletin, September 12, 1912.

6. Capital, September 13, 1912.

success. When first organized most of the members of the company were only seven and eight years old. Now many of them were fifteen and sixteen years of age. However, according to the Bulletin, they still retained the charm and fascination of childhood. Now, in fact, they had the advantage of the confidence and training of years on the stage.⁷

One of the highlights on the Orpheum circuit in the fall of 1912 was the Gilbert and Sullivan Festival series of productions starring De Wolf Hopper. As part of the regular three-night stand during the last half of the week, the Festival Company produced four operettas. [They played one matinee.] The opening presentation was The Mikado. Although the entire cast was highly praised by all of Edmonton's theatre critics, and included such notables as Blanche Duffield, Viola Gillette, Arthur Cunningham, Alice Brady and Louise Barthel,⁸ De Wolf Hopper by far outshone them all. Indeed, audiences would have it no other way:

Mr. Hopper never in his life impersonated anyone but himself, and if by any chance he could do so, it would be instantly resented by his audiences. He will go on through all his career, therefore, demonstrating how irresistably funny are the troubles of so and so, usually a monarch of some mythical kingdom....It is the essence of unctuousness. His conception of the character is the happy blending of genuine comedy and mock pathos, and it is as good to hear him hiss, 'They Never Would be Missed,' as it used to be to hear him recite 'Casey.'⁹

7. Bulletin, September 25, 1912.

8. Bulletin, September 26, 1912.

9. Journal, October 4, 1912.

The Sullivan Festival Company's other offerings, Patience, The Pirates of Penzance and H. M. S. Pinafore were as enthusiastically received as The Mikado. De Wolf Hopper, the other principals and the chorus were all highly praised for their singing, dancing, acting and all-round enthusiasm which also infected their auditors. The scenery and costumes were also greatly admired.¹⁰

The Whitney Opera Company's production of The Chocolate Soldier entertained Edmonton theatre-goers later in October with moderate success.¹¹ An unusual play called Pomander Walk held the boards at the theatre for the last half of the following week. The production which contained no starring parts was unique because, as the Bulletin so well noted, there were "no loud climaxes, no murders, no shrieks, no scandals, no municipal rottenness to expose, not even a tensely dramatic moment."¹² The play was one that dwelt upon characterization and its success among popular audiences surprised critics.¹³ The major success of the play was due to the delicate delineation of the various characters by the cast. They succeeded admirably so that the Journal praised them highly, writing that they interpreted the author's lines with sincerity and grace, and that each member was admirably suited to his part."¹⁴

The Pollard Juvenile Opera Company returned for another engagement and entertained Edmontonians in Sergeant Blue and The Toymaker¹⁵ in 1912,

10. Capital, October 4,5 and 7, 1912; Bulletin, October 5, 1912.

11. Bulletin, September 27, 1912.

12. Bulletin, October 25, 1912.

13. Bulletin, September 21, 1912.

14. Journal, October 25, 1912.

15. Bulletin, October 14, 1912.

and in La Belle Butterfly, The Mikado, The American Millionaire and The Toymaker in May of 1913.¹⁶

Paul Gilmore came next in the play The Havoc. The Bulletin reviewer concerned with the illogical conclusion, found the plot rather a strange one but interesting nevertheless. He added that Mr. Gilmore's characterization was a strong one but that the presentation of the other principals could be more vigorous.¹⁷

Rapidly approaching its five hundredth consecutive performance in New York City, the play Bought and Paid For was sent on tour and arrived in Edmonton early in November. The elaborate costumes were an essential feature of the production and accounted for much of its success. An advance article in the Bulletin said that twenty milliners and seamstresses took part in the construction of the wardrobe for the play. The women were kept busy for a whole year working on gowns and hats only for the female portion of the cast.¹⁸ The review gave credit to the actors and the play itself, saying that it was convincingly acted, cleverly written and beautifully staged.¹⁹

The engagement of Joseph H. Sheehan and his company later in November should have been one of the highlights of the theatre season in Edmonton. Mr. Sheehan, of course, was a celebrated American tenor²⁰ whose praises had long been sung throughout Canada and America. The productions of Il Trovatore and The Love Tales of Hoffman, however, were

16. Bulletin, May 12, 1913.

17. Bulletin, November 1, 1912.

18. Bulletin, November 5, 1912.

19. Bulletin, November 8, 1912.

20. Bulletin, November 2, 1912.

far from successful. The main reason was that the tenor, who was the star and leading attraction, was suffering from a severe cold so that Il Trovatore had to be cut extensively.²¹ The Capital felt that criticism of his performance under the circumstances would be unfair.²² Except for the performances of Gladys Caldwell, most of the other singers also failed to generate much enthusiasm among their auditors. Furthermore, according to the Journal, the settings were mediocre.²³

The second offering of the Sheehan Company was more successful. The minor parts were better taken and the settings more impressive.²⁴ As in the first production, anachronisms in dress and setting were much in evidence.²⁵

An aggregation of some of the foremost actors and actresses in England, calling themselves The Versatiles, made two successful appearances at the Empire in November. The company, headed by Lara Clinton, gave a two-part programme. The first consisted of music hall acts which included many of the recent song hits from the Old Country as well as a number of recent New York successes. The second part was devoted to the musical comedy, In the Camp-Fire's Glow.²⁶ The Eye Glass Club was the offering for their second engagement later the same month.²⁷

21. Journal, November 15, 1912.

22. Capital, November 16, 1912.

23. Journal, November 15, 1912.

24. Capital, November 16, 1912; Journal, November 16, 1912.

25. Journal, November 16, 1912.

26. Bulletin, November 15, 1912.

27. Bulletin, November 26, 1912.

Without doubt the greatest event in the history of the theatre in Edmonton took place on January 13, 1913, when Sarah Bernhardt graced the boards of the Empire Theatre with the final act from Camille. Early in November, 1912, Edmonton's daily newspapers began printing articles regarding the great actress. As December drew to a close and the new year dawned the tension began to mount as Edmontonians eagerly followed the events of her tour through the east. No other actress before or since, not even Mrs. Fiske, was idolized and given as royal a treatment as the Divine Sarah:

Monday, January 13th, 1913, in spite of the fact that it has as many thirteens as the heart of the most superstitious might desire, will be a red-letter day in the theatrical history of Edmonton, for it will have to be recorded as the one day on which the world's greatest actress, Madame Sarah Bernhardt, visited us....So on Monday, from eight o'clock in the morning when Madame's special train arrives here, until midnight, Edmonton will be the all-too brief resting place of the 'adored-one'....²⁸

At the Empire, stage carpenters were kept busy for days preparing for Madame Bernhardt's arrival. Four of the largest and best flats of scenery used at the theatre were made into a large dressing room equipped with a door and a hallway leading up to it. A Bulletin reporter noted that a large dressing table with a tall mirror was placed at one side of the room, a couch occupied another corner, while a mahogany clothes chest separated the two. Two steam radiators were specially installed to keep Madame Bernhardt comfortable during her stay in the theatre. A carpet

one inch in thickness was specially procured to "insure her feet against any wintry blasts that might steal into her royal presence."²⁹

Sarah Bernhardt was sixty-nine years old which made the tour all the more remarkable. Bulmer Watt noted in his reminiscences that the last act of Camille [which took over an hour to present] was the only possible choice for the actress since she had recently had her leg amputated, and, of course, the dying lady of the camelias never left her couch.³⁰

Finally the great day arrived and another milestone in Edmonton's theatrical history had been passed. "Sarah Bernhardt, idol of our fathers and grandfathers, and at whose shrine the present generation now worships,"³¹ had come and gone. Although the scene from Camille was acted in French and it took a while for the audience to adjust their emotions to pitch them in concert with La Dame, whose heart was anguished beyond endurance by the separation from her lover,³² Sarah Bernhardt conquered another city:

Rather small of stature, by her flowing garments and statuesque poses, she gave the impression of height. Her hair is tawny, falling over forehead and eyes. Her eyes are large, tragic, filled with fires of all emotions. Her little fingers, vibrating, full of life, scatter lightnings. The whole Bernhardt is a thing beyond comprehension, a wonder woman, a goddess.³³

29. Bulletin, November 16, 1912.

30. Watt, Journal, September 27, 1949.

31. Bulletin, January 14, 1913.

32. Capital, January 14, 1913.

33. Bulletin, January 14, 1913.

From the opening strains of the overture and the rise of the curtain to its fall, the actress held the audience. Women wept, and men were seen with moisture in their eyes as the dying courtesan,

Choking back the death rattle in her throat...calls
for Armand...rises with her expiring strength all
expended in the effort...falls into his embrace:

"Mors-je, mors-je." How much longer can the almost
incredible strain be prolonged? It fills the very
air of the theatre -time stands still for them and
the world is not- the wonder of Bernhardt has passed
beyond the things of the common day, has taken with
it those who see and hear her.³⁴

Into a little theatre in a city fringing almost the wilderness had crept something of the feeling that won for the actress the honor of kings, aristocrats, statesmen and millionaires:

For a moment there is silence for not at once or lightly
can men and women regain a grip on themselves....Then like
one the people rise at her, up and down flies the curtain,
scarcely yet can those who have seen and heard permit her
to pass from their sight. She stands swaying slightly
with reaction: those wonderful eyes shine half hid
through her low-dressed hair, like cornflowers through
the ripe grain of an English harvest field: then the
last curtain and nothing but the memory.³⁵

34. Journal, January 14, 1913.

35. Journal, January 14, 1913.

January also brought to the Empire a production of Polly of the Circus starring Elsie St. Leon of the famous St. Leon family.³⁶ The show was a spectacular one and required three carloads of scenery. Included among the effects was the equipment for one ring of a circus with clowns, equestriennes and acrobats.³⁷ Miss St. Leon essayed the role of Polly, and according to the Capital, was well fitted for the part of an unsophisticated circus girl.³⁸

Maude Adams' mother, Annie Adams, made a second appearance in Edmonton later the same month in a play written especially for her called The Butler's Secret.³⁹ Although advance articles stated that her role in the play would bring out all the personality of the actress and that she would be supported by an excellent company and splendid scenery,⁴⁰ critics in the city were rather disappointed. The Capital's reviewer wrote that The Butler's Secret was one of the dreariest affairs imaginable. He added that it was "A theatre jellyfish to which not all the clever acting in the world could give backbone enough to even raise it into coherency."⁴¹ In spite of the handicap under which she labored, Mrs. Adams managed to endear herself to the audience with her soft pretty voice, her delicate, expressive hands and her flashes of humor.⁴²

The Rosary also held the boards of the Empire for three nights in

36. Bulletin, December 24, 1912.

37. Bulletin, December 24, 1912.

38. Capital, January 3, 1913.

39. Bulletin, January 4, 1913.

40. Bulletin, January 4, 1913.

41. Capital, January 10, 1913.

42. Capital, January 10, 1913.

January. The production scored such a success in Edmonton that it was booked for a return engagement in December.⁴³ The city's critics were particularly impressed by the acting of Frank O. Ireson in the role of a priest, who was "breezy or serious with just the right degree of emphasis."⁴⁴ The scenery used in the play was also of a high order particularly that of the last act which showed the outside of a chapel.⁴⁵ On its second run, The Rosary proved as popular as it had done before.⁴⁶

Edmontonians thronged the Empire at the end of January to see the famed English actors, Lewis Waller and Madge Titheridge perform in Alexander Dumas' comedy, A Marriage of Convenience.⁴⁷ Critics and audiences alike agreed that everything about the production, costumes, cast, sets and atmosphere belonged to one successful harmonious whole.⁴⁸ Lewis Waller, especially, was superb. The Capital felt that it was a tribute to Waller's art that he, who had played such roles as Henry the Fifth with great success, could subdue his own personality to produce as exquisite a portrayal as he did in this play.⁴⁹ The Journal claimed that as the French count, Mr. Waller was

...above praise...and beyond criticism. As representing one of the most representative types of an age whose only sincerity was its sincerity to insincerity, he struck one

43. Bulletin, February 1, 1913.

44. Journal, January 25, 1913.

45. Bulletin, February 1, 1913.

46. Bulletin, December 26, 1913.

47. Bulletin, January 18, 1913.

48. Journal, January 31, 1913.

49. Capital, January 31, 1913.

as perfect. Courtly grace, a calm, unruffled acceptance of the good and the ill, an absolute immobility to everything except that which touched his fantastic notions of personal or family honor, a dandy to his dainty finger tips, with hands whiter and more slender than many a refined woman's yet possessed of a courage that enabled him to go forth to a duel...Mr. Waller portrayed with unerring accuracy.⁵⁰

Madge Titheridge was excellent as the Countess too and shared the honors equally with Mr. Waller:

She had all the dainty grace, the inimitable good taste, all the piquant diablerie of the woman of the period, in her case toned down by an early training in a convent to a charming ingenuousness, which betrayed the innate goodness of her heart and the possession of more womanly feeling than most of her cast displayed.⁵¹

The successful musical with which Mort H. Singer had been enchanting Chicagoans throughout the summer previously, A Modern Eve, was produced at the Empire in February.⁵² The production, which contained more song hits than any musical comedy presented in years, played to good audiences with the usual success.⁵³ A Modern Eve was followed by a less successful presentation of The Balkan Princess starring Wallace

50. Journal, January 31, 1913.

51. Journal, January 31, 1913.

52. Bulletin, February 6, 1913.

53. Bulletin, February 21, 1913.

Beery.⁵⁴ Theatre-goers were assured by advance notices that they would be seeing a high class organization patterned after that which played for one entire year at the Gaiety in London.⁵⁵ All of Edmonton's drama critics did not agree on the truth of this statement. The Capital's critic agreed that the music was good, that the comedy was real comedy, that the ballet was above criticism, and that the whole show was without a weak spot.⁵⁶ The Journal's critic was not nearly so enthusiastic. He complained that the play dragged intolerably, while the waits between acts gave one nearly enough time to read a magazine or two before the curtain was rung up again.⁵⁷ The reviewers did agree, however, that Miss Gifford's singing was not all that bad and that Wallace Beery's comedy was really quite excellent.⁵⁸

Early in March an abundance of crisp comedy and an exceptionally capable cast of players made the presentation of The Girl from Toyko one of the most pleasing comedies seen in Edmonton that winter.⁵⁹ Among the favorites in the cast were John Raymond, Julia Morlon, Lee Hobbs Martin and May Holton. The light farce was appreciated as light entertainment. The Capital's critic found the piece especially praiseworthy because of the absence of all vulgarity and suggestiveness which he

54. Capital, February 28, 1913.

55. Bulletin, February 22, 1913.

56. Capital, February 28, 1913.

57. Journal, February 28, 1913.

58. Journal, February 28, 1913; Capital, February 28, 1913; Bulletin, February 28, 1913.

59. Journal, March 7, 1913.

thought too often accompanied such productions.⁶⁰

One of the most charming and best known of English comediennes, Alice Lloyd, acted in The Rose Maid later the same month.⁶¹ This was truly a one-woman show as Miss Lloyd overshadowed all other production elements. According to the Journal, her specialties between acts made one almost wish to sidestep the second act indefinitely.⁶² But as in De Wolf Hopper's case this was a strong point of the production and not a weakness:

Alice Lloyd - The Rose Maid - The Rose Maid - Alice Lloyd, indicating the synonym of synonyms. The Rose Maid being a Lloydism because there is not a dull moment during the whole presentation and nobody ever knew of a dull moment when Alice Lloyd occupied the spotlight....The distracting personality of the leading lady demanded so much concentration as to almost eliminate the rest of the performance from the vision altogether.⁶³

Despite Miss Lloyd's dominance, the remainder of the cast sang and danced very well. Also, to say that the gowns and sets were "stunning" only half described them, according to the Capital.⁶⁴ All in all, the critics agreed that The Rose Maid was a "delight to eye and ear"⁶⁵ and one of the finer productions of the season.

60. Capital, March 7, 1913.

61. Bulletin, March 15, 1913.

62. Journal, March 21, 1913.

63. Capital, March 21, 1913.

64. Capital, March 21, 1913.

65. Bulletin, March 21, 1913.

As they had rarely done before, Edmonton theatre-goers showed their disgust with the Empire's last offering in March by walking out in the middle of a play.⁶⁶ Apparently much of what was immorality in Alma, Where Do You Live? had been cut from the book for Canadian consumption.⁶⁷ Even so, the play was still scarcely fit for an average audience.⁶⁸ Because Alma was expurgated, the play became a "flat, unwholesome skeleton"⁶⁹ of a production with only crude lines that were only mildly diverting.⁷⁰ The critics agreed, however, that the costumes were quite excellent, that Charles F. Orr, the male lead, had a rich tenor that was a pleasure to listen to and that Grace Drew, the female lead, acted exceptionally well, even though she fell short vocally.⁷¹

Bud Fisher's famous creations, Mutt and Jeff, appeared in the flesh at the Empire Theatre early in April, in the persons of Jerry Sullivan and Ed West.⁷² The critics agreed that the pair were almost wholly responsible for the great success of the show.⁷³ The remainder of the company in Mutt and Jeff gave the impression that they had been strung together as cheaply as possible to provide some padding for the antics of the two comedians.

The lines, while as good, or as bad, if you like, as those in

66. Journal, March 28, 1913.

67. Bulletin, March 28, 1913.

68. Journal, March 28, 1913.

69. Journal, March 28, 1913.

70. Bulletin, March 28, 1913.

71. Journal, March 28, 1913; Bulletin, March 28, 1913.

72. Capital, April 4, 1913.

73. Capital, April 4, 1913; Bulletin, April 4, 1913.

the usual musical comedy of today, lose all sense when recited in the sing-song style of some of the ladies with leading roles, and when bellowed by some gentlemen who apparently think noise is the chief requisite in dramatic success.⁷⁴

The Bulletin's critic added that the costumes and the scenery were good,⁷⁵ probably because they kept quiet and said nothing.

An all-round success appeared next at the Empire in the long-time favorite among musical comedies, The Prince of Pilsen, starring Jess Dandy. The production delighted a bumper house at the Empire:⁷⁶

With a laugh and a tuneful melody in every line, with a male chorus that look like real men and who can really sing, with male and female principals who have voices that they know how to use, with a pretty stage setting and gorgeous costumes, and...with a female chorus of good songstresses who are young enough to be called girls without suspicions of irony....⁷⁷

The original production and cast from the 48th Street Theatre in New York, including Madge Kennedy and William Morris, delighted Empire Theatre patrons in the comedy Little Miss Brown in May. Everything conspired against the production. A breakdown in the transfer arrangements made it necessary for the audience to wait until very late for the curtain to go up. Adding to the discomfort of the situation, the orchestra played at

74. Bulletin, April 4, 1913.

75. Bulletin, April 4, 1913.

76. Capital, April 25, 1913.

77. Journal, April 25, 1913.

its very worst.⁷⁸ According to the Journal's reviewer, a company of players which could give pleasure under such circumstances was something out of the ordinary. The Journal's critic wrote: "Miss Kennedy in the title role, was the essence of charm and naturalness."⁷⁹ The Capital's reviewer noted that the other characterizations were also very well done.⁸⁰ Furthermore, the piece was quietly but tastefully staged. The first scene was laid in the rotunda of a hotel at night and the last two in an apartment where the plot was developed to a high state of entanglement and unravelled to the satisfaction of all concerned.⁸¹

The five thousandth performance of The Merry Widow in America was celebrated at the Empire later in May, with Mabel Wilbur and Charles Meakins heading the cast.⁸² Advance notices claimed this to be the biggest and most costly attraction in the city all season.⁸³ Indeed, reviews lavished praise on the costumes and sets. The Capital's drama writer was most impressed with the first scene that represented a ballroom in a Parisian Embassy.⁸⁴ Miss Wilbur was most admired for her soprano voice and Mr. Meakins for his graceful actions and dancing.⁸⁵

May came to an end with the production of Maggie Pepper starring Rose Stahl, one of the foremost American actresses of the day.⁸⁶ Miss

78. Journal, May 2, 1913.

79. Journal, May 2, 1913.

80. Capital, May 2, 1913.

81. Capital, May 2, 1913.

82. Bulletin, April 30, 1913.

83. Bulletin, April 30, 1913.

84. Capital, May 9, 1913.

85. Capital, May 2, 1913.

86. Bulletin, May 24, 1913.

Stahl's consistent characterization and highly developed sense of humor delighted Edmontonians and the play proved to be most successful.⁸⁷

To the Empire in June came another well-known actress in the person of Blanche Bates. Using The Witness For the Defense as her vehicle, Miss Bates justified the reputation the critics had given her of being one of the greatest of living emotional actresses.⁸⁸ The Journal recorded that one forgot at times that she was acting -she seemed so to live the part. Over and over the audience applauded some especially fine piece of work. According to the Journal curtain calls for her were the order of the evening.⁸⁹

"Do you believe in fairies?" asked Peter Pan of an Edmonton audience, and the response was one emphatic, "Of course!" According to the Bulletin one could not help it after seeing and hearing Maude Adams and her company relive the dream play of the boy who would not grow up.⁹⁰ Maude Adams charmed critics and audiences alike in perhaps her most famous and successful role for the first time in June.⁹¹ The Journal critic recalled that it was difficult to believe that Miss Adams could be an ordinary woman off the stage, so thoroughly did she seem impregnated with the atmosphere of Never Never Land.⁹² The Bulletin's reviewer agreed: "She is not Maude Adams at all. She is Peter Pan. You cannot imagine the part

87. Bulletin, May 30, 1913.

88. Capital, June 6, 1913.

89. Journal, June 6, 1913.

90. Bulletin, June 13, 1913.

91. Bulletin, June 2, 1913.

92. Journal, June 13, 1913.

as play-acting. It is too real, too sympathetic, too boyish."⁹³ The whole cast was praised for the realistic impression of fantasy and make-believe as well as the scenery and sets for their realism.⁹⁴

Two other productions held the boards at the Empire in June. The first was the latest New York success, Over the River, acted by the well-known comedian Eddie Foy and his Seven Little Foys. The Bulletin's critic wrote that with his score of Broadway girls Mr. Foy and his children achieved one of the big laugh nights of the theatrical season.⁹⁵ John Mason came next in the serious drama As a Man Thinks. His characterization of a Jewish doctor, said the Journal, was one of those achievements that marked off an era in an actor's life.⁹⁶

The usual melange of song, dance and ad lib⁹⁷ held the boards at the Empire for three days in July in The Red Widow. That the production proved successful was due to the superb comedy technique of the star, Raymond Hitchcock.⁹⁸ He was a natural comedian who did not require to do much more than "peep round the wings or march across the boards to raise a laugh."⁹⁹

The original production and cast of Fine Feathers, direct from the Astor Theatre in New York, left an indelible impression on Edmontonians later the same month. The excellent performances given by each of the

93. Bulletin, June 13, 1913.

94. Journal, June 13, 1913; Bulletin, June 13, 1913.

95. Bulletin, June 14, 1913.

96. Journal, June 27, 1913.

97. Journal, July 4, 1913.

98. Journal, July 4, 1913; Bulletin, July 4, 1913.

99. Journal, July 4, 1913.

six members of the cast was the main subject of each of the reviews in the city's newspapers. As acted by Rose Coghlan, Robert Edeson, Max Figman, Lolita Robertson, Wilton Lackaye and Amelia Summers, the Bulletin prophesied that the play would be remembered long by all who saw it.¹⁰⁰

Spectacle such as was not seen in Edmonton for some time returned with the production of the musical extravaganza, Hanky Panky, starring the comedienne Florence Moore. Every aspect of the stage production was impressive in its opulence and delighted the city's theatre-goers. The critics praised the show girls, the stage settings, the costumes, the singing, dancing and the comedy of the principals.¹⁰¹ Florence Moore was the most popular of the comedians. She was "just as screamingly funny as Marie Dressler, just as slyly humorous as Marie Cahill -and in addition she had an individuality and a way of making fun that was all Florence Moore and nobody else."¹⁰² When the curtain rang down on Hanky Panky for the last time in July, it also ended the regular run of musical comedy and drama at the Empire until the fall. During the remainder of the summer of 1913 only Orpheum vaudeville was seen in the theatre during the first half of each week.

In September the Empire resumed the regular series of dramatic and musical offerings during the last half of each week with another New York success, Officer 666.¹⁰³ The Bulletin happily wrote that the musical

100. Bulletin, July 11, 1913.

101. Capital, July 18, 1913; Journal, July 18, 1913; Bulletin, July 18, 1913.

102. Capital, July 18, 1913.

103. Bulletin, September 9, 1913.

had only one purpose in life and that was to make people laugh, and in this it succeeded in no small measure.¹⁰⁴ Critics differed in their opinions over the merits of The Country Boy presented in October.¹⁰⁵ The Journal felt that the play was delightful, well acted and intensely interesting.¹⁰⁶ The Bulletin, however, stated that although the play did afford a pleasant evening of entertainment, it was hardly up to the standard set by other companies and productions. It was poorly written with the second act failing to visibly advance the plot. Also, a money saving device was instituted by doubling a large number of the parts which created some confusion and made the play less interesting.¹⁰⁷ The Journal conceded that new scenery might have been in order.¹⁰⁸

The critics, however, did concur on the merits of the Empire's next production, The Girl from Mumms starring Olive Vail. They felt that although the play was well staged and the costumes pretty, the lines lacked life making the whole effect rather insipid.¹⁰⁹ The actors were unable to instil any life into the dull and commonplace book and stilted lyrics.¹¹⁰ However, Olive Vail improved since she last appeared at the Empire, singing unusually well and acting with grace and abandon. Although the chorus

104. Bulletin, September 12, 1913.

105. The remainder of September was taken up with return productions of The Barrier and A Bachelor's Honeymoon previously discussed on the occasion of their first performances in Edmonton.

106. Journal, October 10, 1913.

107. Bulletin, October 10, 1913.

108. Journal, October 10, 1913.

109. Bulletin, October 17, 1913; Journal, October 17, 1913.

110. Bulletin, October 17, 1913.

was rather small and could hardly be described as a bower of beauty, the Journal said they sang well and this was a welcome relief from choruses that appeared to exist for appearance only.¹¹¹

The serious drama, Freckles, succeeded The Girl from Mumms on the Empire stage. Although it did not generate any great amount of enthusiasm, the play was appreciated as a capable dramatization of the book by the same name. Freckles was well acted and mounted, although the Bulletin critic claimed that more attention to detail would have done no harm.¹¹²

Margaret Anglin returned to Edmonton with a revival of the Shakespearean comedies Twelfth Night, As You Like It and The Taming of the Shrew in November. Miss Anglin was highly praised for her performances in all three plays, especially for her magnetism and the intellectual grasp with which she combined a certain gentle womanliness. The Bulletin added that she had the charm of personality, and most important, the power of humanizing a character without sacrificing the ideal aspect.¹¹³ For example, as Viola in Twelfth Night, the Journal drama critic wrote that her success was due mostly to the interplay of the quality of real boyishness with a constant suggestion of womanliness.¹¹⁴

The company was an undeniably strong one and also contributed a great deal to the success of the plays.¹¹⁵ The staging was exceptionally

111. Journal, October 17, 1913.

112. Bulletin, October 21, 1913.

113. Bulletin, November 1, 1913.

114. Journal, November 7, 1913.

115. Bulletin, November 7, 1913.

good. The Journal noted that the delays, considering the large number of changes, were of short duration.¹¹⁶

Another company which was considered exceptionally well balanced by the city's critics¹¹⁷ followed the Shakespearean revivals in the play What Happened to Mary? The leading roles were taken by Anne Bradley, Lawrence Evart, Edwin May and Maud Cooling.¹¹⁸

One of England's foremost light comedians,¹¹⁹ Lawrence Brough, held the boards next in The Lady of Osten. Again, the entire company was considered very good.¹²⁰ All-round proficiency was evident once more in the original New York production of Ready Money at the end of November.¹²¹ However, unlike the previous few productions, the burden of the play was placed on the shoulders of two of the actors, Robert Ober and Douglas J. Wood. Still, they were a very clever pair of actors. The Journal speculated that had the roles been attempted by less skillful hands the whole production might have become a melodramatic farce.¹²²

December, 1913 brought another engagement of The Barrier and The Rosary, both discussed previously. The last new play of the year was the New York and London hit, The Pink Lady.¹²³ Theatre critics in the city differed greatly regarding this production so that one might ex-

116. Journal, November 7, 1913.

117. Bulletin, November 14, 1913; Journal, November 14, 1913.

118. Bulletin, November 14, 1913.

119. Bulletin, November 15, 1913.

120. Journal, November 21, 1913.

121. Bulletin, November 19, 1913.

122. Journal, November 28, 1913.

123. Bulletin, November 29, 1913.

pect they had seen two different plays. The Journal's reviewer wrote that The Pink Lady was the best all-round light opera production that had been seen in Edmonton for some time. He added that the choruses were good, the staging exceptional and the dances excellent.¹²⁴ The critic from the Bulletin agreed that the scenery was good, but that the acting was only good in parts, the singing poor and the plot, "as thin as prison soup."¹²⁵ He added that the audience was most unenthusiastic.

124. Journal, December 5, 1913.

125. Bulletin, December 5, 1913.

Chapter IV

The Lyceum Theatre and Others

During 1909 and until the fall of 1910, the Edmonton Opera House continued to present the varied program of entertainment that had been its custom during the past years of its dominance as the major playhouse in the city. With the Empire Theatre almost entirely in the vaudeville business, the old Opera House still had no real rival.

These last years as the leading non-vaudeville theatre in the city saw at the Opera House a number of short stock engagements by old familiar companies. The Summers Company entertained Edmontonians with their usual success in two engagements in 1909. A one-week programme in January¹ was followed by one of four weeks in December and January, 1910.² Apart from George Summers, who was always appreciated, the most popular member of the cast was Belle Stevenson, considered an emotional actress of some merit.³ The organization, which had now been in existence for fourteen years, would always be recognized, according to the Bulletin, as a premier stock company.⁴

The Jane Eyre Company held the boards of the Opera House for one week in March,⁵ followed the next month by a troupe managed by Lee Brandon, starring Theodore Lorch. Mr. Lorch was considered a more than capable character actor with a compelling personality and strong dramatic instincts.⁶ The Bulletin felt that he was particularly impressive in the duel character role he assumed in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in which he had some

1. Bulletin, January 2, 1909.

2. Bulletin, January 11, 1910.

3. Bulletin, December 14, 1909.

4. Bulletin, December 6, 1909. A list of plays produced by the Summers Stock Company during their 1909 engagements is included in Appendix E.

5. Bulletin, February 17, 1909.

6. Bulletin, April 29, 1909.

great moments, never losing himself in either of the two characters.⁷

The most popular of the stock companies during this period was Jeanne Russell's troupe which ran two engagements at the Opera House. The first one was for nine nights in May-June. During this appearance, the management of the theatre announced that the Opera House had never in its history been as "packed" as it was for the production of Miss Russell's Squaw Man.⁸ The second engagement, for two weeks in August-September, according to the Bulletin's drama critic, again struck a popular chord with Edmontonians.⁹

The May Roberts Gillard Company opened a two week's engagement at the Opera House in October with the society drama, Madame Satan. The Bulletin informed its readers prior to the opening night that May Gillard was considered to be one of the most pleasing and popular actresses on the Canadian stage.¹⁰ She soon became established as an emotional actress of exceptional ability in the city. Referring to her role in Madame Satan, the review in the Bulletin stated that heavy emotional leads were just the thing for her facile method. The critic added that the Edmonton Opera House had not in many months seen so clever an actress. In A Grass Widow her performance in the emotional role came as a "veritable revelation." The Bulletin's reviewer claimed that adjectives failed to pronounce an adequate appreciation of Miss Gillard's talents.¹¹

7. Bulletin, April 29, 1909. A list of plays produced by the Lorch Stock Company during this engagement is included in Appendix E.

8. Bulletin, June 5, 1909.

9. Bulletin, September 9, 1909. A list of plays produced by the Jeanne Russell Stock Company during their two engagements in 1909 is included in Appendix E.

10. Bulletin, October 15, 1909.

11. Bulletin, October 22, 1909.

The general audience also recognized this exceptional ability. During the performance of Mrs. Temple's Telegram, for example, the applause was so spontaneous and enthusiastic as at times to cause a considerable wait upon the stage.¹²

As in the previous decade, several troupes appeared on the boards of the Opera House for shorter runs than those previously discussed. Some only had one play in their repertoire. Such a group was the Kerry Gow Company which was billed as one of the largest and best that could be seen in the entire Northwest that season.¹³ Kerry Gow starred Lionel Swift, a young Irish actor and singer, who, the Bulletin predicted, would have a brilliant future.¹⁴ The company relied somewhat on spectacle. The play, for example, included three scenes of outstanding realism such as the Great Prison Scene, the Blacksmith Shop in which a real horse was actually shod, and the Carrier Pigeon scene.¹⁵

Prior to this stock engagement at the Opera House, Theodore Lorch co-starred with Florence Roberts in The House of Bondage for two nights.¹⁶ Florence Roberts was considered one of America's foremost actresses¹⁷ and on more than one occasion compared favourably with Mrs. Fiske.¹⁸ This

12. Bulletin, October 26, 1909. A list of plays produced by the May Roberts Gillard Stock Company during this engagement is included in Appendix E.

13. Bulletin, March 22, 1909.

14. Bulletin, March 25, 1909.

15. Bulletin, March 25, 1909.

16. Bulletin, April 5, 1909.

17. Bulletin, April 13, 1909.

18. Bulletin, April 13, 1909; Bulletin, April 18, 1909.

production also relied on spectacle for its success. An advance notice in the Bulletin boasted fifty sets of lines and eight extra men in addition to the regular house crew required to work the show. The play necessitated a sixty foot baggage car to transport the effects.¹⁹

The play Saved starring Betty Barrows, Loring Kelly and Lionel Swift held the boards at the Opera House early in October. November brought an elaborate scenic production of As You Like It starring William Yule and Violet Eddy. Later in the month a company headed by J. G. Stuttz and Aggi Marion Stuttz graced the boards of the Opera House with Was She to Blame?, The Light of Lime or Crystal Cross²⁰ and Rip Van Winkle.²¹ This company, composed of sixteen actors and Morrison's Vocal and Instrumental Orchestra was somewhat larger than most of those that visited Edmonton in 1909.²²

Henry Hall, Chas. D. Herman, Vaughan Trevor and Mary Elizabeth Forbes headed the cast of The Man from Home on the Opera House's stage for two nights early in February, 1910.²³ The group carried their own scenic equipment and presented the show exactly as it was staged in New York and Chicago during its original run.²⁴ This production found greater favor among theatre-goers in Edmonton than any of the other productions during this time. The Bulletin wrote:

'The Man from Home' is the finest comedy....The productions

19. Bulletin, April 18, 1909.

20. Bulletin, November 25, 1909.

21. Bulletin, December 1, 1909.

22. Bulletin, November 30, 1909.

23. Bulletin, January 28, 1909.

24. Bulletin, January 28, 1909.

of this character, which have braved the long road here, have been so few and far between that such a play as 'The Man from Home' is appreciated much more by an audience, such as the Edmonton audience last night, whose appetite has been vindicated by fourth-rate performers, than by an audience to whom such a production is not out of the ordinary run. For this reason the applause was distinctly spontaneous and the enjoyment obviously genuine.²⁵

Music lovers in Edmonton were not neglected in 1909 and 1910 either. The San Francisco Opera Company was the first of the musical comedy groups to appear at the Opera House in this new era. In March, 1909, they produced Dolly Varden, The Boccacio, The Strollers and Wang.²⁶ Their popularity was as great as during their previous engagements in the city. With a cast of forty persons on stage and an augmented orchestra, the company played to capacity houses for each performance.²⁷ Later the same month they returned for a second engagement. Another production of Dolly Varden was again well appreciated.²⁸ However, their performance in The Girl from Paris was another story. The Bulletin critic wrote:

The whole production was sloppy. The impression was unmistakably conveyed that anything would do for an audience unaccustomed to seeing opera....It possessed as much ginger

25. Bulletin, February 2, 1910. It should be remembered that the elaborate productions at the Empire Theatre were yet to be seen.

26. Bulletin, March 6, 1909.

27. Bulletin, March 10, 1909.

28. Bulletin, March 17, 1909.

as might be drawn by an arduous and strenuous effort from a yellow-toothed horse with ring-bone and spavin....When the chorus girl on one end was lackadaisically posing a shapely limb in the air, the girl at the other end of the line was making a painful effort to lift her foot from the stage floor, and they gawked at each other continuously in an effort to discover if they were performing the proper evolutions at the proper moment.²⁹

The San Francisco Opera Company was considerably more successful during their third engagement of one week in November. While the whole troupe was once again praised for their performance in The Gay Parisienne, The Runaway Girl, The Toymaker and The Geisha, it was Teddy Webb who generated the most enthusiasm among critics and audiences. As the principal comedian, Teddy Webb, the Bulletin enthusiastically informed its readers, was the San Francisco Opera Company and the San Francisco Opera Company was Teddy Webb.³⁰

The troupe returned again in January, 1910 with still a larger chorus than before. They performed successfully The Time, the Place and the Girl, They Loved a Lassie and The Girl from Manila.³¹

The Colonial Musical Comedy Company was said to be the most expensive light opera organization that ever visited Edmonton.³² The crowd was so great at the Opera House in June of 1909 for the performance of The Show Girl that the 'standing room only' sign had to be taken in shortly after

29. Bulletin, March 17, 1909.

30. Bulletin, November 5, 1909.

31. Bulletin, January 3, 1910.

32. Bulletin, June 25, 1909.

8:45 p.m., refusing admission to fully two hundred people. The play included the famous English pony ballet, the American beauty show and the also famous Broadway Broilers.³³ Instead of performing in a second production of A Trip to India as originally announced,³⁴ the management decided to repeat The Show Girl for two additional performances.³⁵

In July, 1909, the Dixie Troubadours returned to the city and played in A Trip to New Orleans.³⁶ According to the Bulletin, this group of "sweet singers and ebony colored fun-makers"³⁷ had been recognized for years as a high-class standard attraction and one that had scored phenomenal successes with theatre-goers wherever they had appeared.³⁸ The most popular member of the company was Sarah Green, "the Alabama Nightingale."³⁹ The Bulletin wrote that in addition to her beautiful voice and exquisite art, nature had endowed her with a bright intellect and a queenly form. The article added, rather matter-of-factly: "...and if it were not for the accident of race and color, she would unquestionably attain distinction in grand opera equal to that enjoyed by Melba, Calve, Tatrassina, and Albani."⁴⁰

The most successful musical comedy production to appear in the city during the two years 1909 and 1910, was The Gay Musician starring Texas

33. Bulletin, July 1, 1910.

34. Bulletin, June 25, 1909.

35. Bulletin, July 1, 1909.

36. Bulletin, July 12, 1909.

37. Bulletin, July 15, 1909.

38. Bulletin, July 15, 1909.

39. Bulletin, July 15, 1909.

40. Bulletin, July 16, 1909.

Guinan. Produced at a cost of \$25,000, the light opera contained more magnificent imported gowns, hats and spectacular scenery than any other similar production which had appeared in Edmonton in years. It took ten carpenters, property men and electricians two days to tear out and rebuild the stage at the Opera House in order that the production could be given in its entirety.⁴¹ However, the musical comedy was appreciated not only for its spectacle but also for the talent of its sixty-five member company. As on her previous engagement, the Bulletin critic felt that although Texas Guinan possessed a good voice, it was not of the opera calibre.⁴²

The master works of grand opera were sung in English in Edmonton for the first time by the Boston Grand Opera Company which appeared on the Opera House stage in May of 1909.⁴³ This was also the first company to visit the city that produced only grand opera, rather than a mixture of light opera, musical comedy and the odd grand opera piece as was previously the case. The arrival of the Boston Grand Opera Company, en route to the music pavilion of the Alaska-Yukon Exhibition, marked a distinct step, as the Bulletin proudly announced, in the progress of the city to metropolitan rank. The four performances given in Edmonton were in Il Trovatore, Faust, Lucia di Lammermoor and Rigoletto.⁴⁴ The principals of the company were all praised for their fine work. However, the Bulletin felt that the choruses and orchestral accompaniment were perhaps not as strong or well-

41. Bulletin, January 17, 1910.

42. Bulletin, January 18, 1910.

43. Bulletin, May 17, 1909.

44. Bulletin, June 7, 1909.

balanced as one would expect in a company possessing such fine solo voices.⁴⁵

The English Grand Opera Singers and Symphony Orchestra appeared on the Opera House Stage in November, 1909. They presented scenes from standard grand and light opera in full costume.⁴⁶ Both the Instrumental and vocal parts of the programme were enthusiastically received by Edmontonians.⁴⁷ This group was followed in December by the famous grand opera singer and leading operatic star of the day, Madame Frieda Langendorff. Madame Langendorff, a former member of the Metropolitan opera cast, performed in a way that was a "revelation and a delight to the discriminating critical judgment."⁴⁸ The Bulletin added that her voice had extreme breadth and a rich quality in the middle and lower register and was astonishingly flexible and pure in the upper register.⁴⁹

Still the most popular troupe in the variety concert category was Jimmie Fax's which made another appearance in Edmonton in February, 1909. From the first announcement of his impending arrival early in January, one advance notice followed another as Edmontonians, aroused to a high degree of excitement, awaited the arrival of "this prince of entertainers."⁵⁰ His popularity was amply evidenced by the heavy advance sale

45. Bulletin, June 15, 1909.

46. Bulletin, November 8, 1909.

47. Bulletin, November 12, 1909.

48. Bulletin, December 8, 1909.

49. Bulletin, December 8, 1909.

50. Bulletin, January 12, 1909.

of tickets for his concert a month after this first announcement.⁵¹ According to the Bulletin, Mr. Fax, as usual, kept the audience in roars of laughter while the soprano, Miss Winters, and male vocalist, Mr. Burton, earned a number of recalls.⁵²

Two other concert groups appeared in October. The Cassels-Percival Entertainers presented a unique and novel entertainment of magic, mirth and music by Caroline Cassels, the contralto, Percival, the wizard and Eviline Fenwick, violinist.⁵³ Later in the month, Joe Gorton's Minstrel Company presented a long and varied programme which teemed with "crisp witticisms, merry flings and new magnetic features, all of which were up to date, up to every demand and up to every expectation."⁵⁴

Various vocalists of considerable fame appeared throughout this period and included such notables as Ethel Webster, a young lady from Edmonton who had already won international acclaim;⁵⁵ Minnie Strachen and Gavin Spence, the Scottish entertainers on their farewell tour of the North American continent;⁵⁶ Edith Miller, the Canadian contralto, who had just returned to her native land fresh from wonderful triumphs in Europe;⁵⁷ Jessie MacLachlan, the Queen of Scottish and Gaelic Song, considered one

51. Bulletin, February 19, 1909.

52. Bulletin, February 20, 1909.

53. Bulletin, October 7, 1909.

54. Bulletin, October 13, 1909.

55. Bulletin, January 16, 1909.

56. Bulletin, March 19, 1909.

57. Bulletin, May 12, 1909.

of the greatest of the living female singers;⁵⁸ and George Neil, Scotland's "Peerless" Tenor who appeared with the famous Balmoral Company, direct from Scotland.⁵⁹

Instrumentalists of note who appeared at the close of the decade included Jenny Lerouge, pianist of the Lille Conservatory in France;⁶⁰ Marie Hall, the violinist whose appearance in Edmonton, the Bulletin prophesied, would long be a red letter day in the development of the musical art in the city;⁶¹ and Mark Hambourg, the world-famous pianist, who also scored a great success.⁶²

Novelty attractions that especially pleased Edmontonians by their uniqueness included the clever impersonator and ventriloquist, Grace Bonner;⁶³ Jean Blewett, the Canadian authoress who read her own poems;⁶⁴ and Madame Leterllier, the Parisian Palmist.⁶⁵

As early as December, 1909, dramatic and musical comedy companies began to encroach more and more upon the vaudeville bills that the Empire Theatre housed. Finally, by August, 1910, the playhouse eliminated

58. Bulletin, November 29, 1909.

59. Bulletin, December 10, 1909.

60. Bulletin, March 25, 1909.

61. Bulletin, April 10, 1909.

62. Bulletin, March 16, 1909.

63. Bulletin, February 11, 1909.

64. Bulletin, September 8, 1909.

65. Bulletin, August 19, 1909.

vaudeville from its programmes completely. Until the Empire became affiliated with the Orpheum circuit in September, 1912, it housed only touring dramatic and musical comedy companies.

The change in production policy in the fall of 1910 was made possible because the Edmonton Opera House had been placed under the same management as the Empire Theatre. In the August 19, 1910 issue of the Bulletin, manager W. B. Sherman announced that the old Edmonton Opera House would be called the Lyceum Theatre. Instead of continuing in its past tradition as the home of the touring companies in Edmonton, the Lyceum Theatre would now house resident stock companies producing musical comedy.⁶⁶

Sherman's Musical Comedy Company which was playing at the Empire Theatre was moved to the Lyceum and began the first of a number of stock engagements.⁶⁷ The most popular actor in the company was Tom Beeson, who was also a comedian of some merit.⁶⁸ For two months the Sherman Stock Company offered Edmontonians "good, clean musical comedy, lacking all the immoral tendencies,"⁶⁹ which according to the Bulletin, frequently accompanied most of the shows of the day. Typical of most of the reviews of the troupe's productions was the following after their performance in Married Mashers:

That Merrymaking Sherman Musical Comedy Company at the Lyceum theatre last night sent the patrons away feeling glad that they had met such a jolly band of actors. The

66. Bulletin, August 19, 1909.

67. Bulletin, August 19, 1909.

68. Bulletin, September 15, 1910.

69. Bulletin, October 6, 1910.

comedy this week,...proved a surprise to the patrons of the house as there were more laughs handed out than usual for so short a show. It was a case of the whole audience being thrown into convulsions of laughter.⁷⁰

The company played a second stock engagement for three months, January through March, in 1911. The new producer for the company was Emil Kruschke, an excellent comedian. Sherman's troupe also appropriated Jack Westerman to their ranks for this engagement and with the support of a good company re-created the success of their previous engagement.⁷¹

At the end of March, the principals of the company were replaced and included a new producer and comedian, Herb Bell, comedian J. Roy Clair, player of juvenile parts, Mr. Cook, and character actor Mr. Vale. The ladies in the cast remained the same.⁷² The engagement of this refurbished group continued until the latter part of April.

The Sherman Musical Comedy Company's final engagement at the Lyceum ran for three weeks in July and August of 1911. Previous to their return, Mabel Lemonic, dancer and singer, had been added to the cast and contributed greatly to the succes of this run.⁷⁴

After an engagement of two hundred twenty performances to capacity business in Calgary, the Lewis and Lake Musical Comedy Company opened the

70. Bulletin, October 11, 1910.

71. Bulletin, January 24, 1911.

72. Bulletin, March 23, 1911.

73. Bulletin, April 20, 1911.

74. Bulletin, July 13, 1911. A list of plays produced by the Sherman Musical Comedy Company at the Lyceum Theatre is included in Appendix E.

first of several stock engagements at the Lyceum in October, 1910.⁷⁵ This troupe appeared after the first engagement of the Sherman Company. Lewis and Lake's second engagement ran for almost a month in October of 1911. It was during this run that the Bulletin pronounced this company even a bigger success than the Shermans were.⁷⁶ The same opinion was held during their third engagement of some six weeks in May and June of 1912.⁷⁷

Upon the completion of the first engagement of the Lewis and Lake company in November, 1910, Hunt's Comedy and Musical Company of twenty-five people direct from San Francisco took over the stage of the Lyceum for a two month engagement.⁷⁸ The fourth musical comedy stock company to hold the boards of the theatre was Cleveland's Merrymakers. Their engagement began after the completion of the second run of Sherman's troupe in April of 1911 and ran for nine weeks until the second week in July. Harry Bernard's Musical Merrymakers entertained the Lyceum's patrons for two months in November and December of 1911. Mr. Bernard was noted for his rich Irish humor and his co-star, Jerrie Gerard, for her clever acting and sweet voice.⁷⁹

In June of 1912, the Lyceum Theatre was cleaned, renovated,⁸⁰ repainted and re-decorated throughout. The stage was enlarged, the lighting

75. Bulletin, October 18, 1910.

76. Bulletin, October 3, 1911.

77. Bulletin, May 7, 1912. A list of plays produced by the Lewis and Lake Musical Company is included in Appendix E.

78. Bulletin, November 21, 1910.

79. Bulletin, November 1, 1911. Lists of plays produced by the Hunt's Comedy and Musical Company, Cleveland's Merrymakers and Bernard's Musical Merrymakers are included in Appendix E.

80. Bulletin, June 24, 1912.

system changed and five hundred opera chairs installed.⁸¹ On July 1st the theatre changed from producing musical comedy stock to dramatic stock with the announcement that the Winnipeg Stock Company under the management of Arthur J. Aylesworth would begin an eight weeks' run.⁸² The company, however, proved to be so popular with Edmontonians that their stay was extended to seven months.⁸³

Although the acting of the entire company was of a satisfactory nature, the greatest reason for their phenomenal success was the spectacle, extravagance and care in staging which characterized each of their productions. In fact, the company announced before their opening performance that elaborate mounting would be a principal feature of all the plays that they presented.⁸⁴ Special scenery and electrical effects were to be built for each production by stage carpenters and scenic artists carried by the company.⁸⁵ For example, the play East, produced in the latter part of July, contained a snow storm and blizzard scene in the third act. According to the Bulletin, the blowing wind was so real as to almost give those in the audience a chill.⁸⁶ Other plays such as Raffles, produced in August, contained extraordinary effects in the way of trick scenery. Why Smith Left Home contained a double set on stage in the second act.⁸⁷

81. Bulletin, June 25, 1912.

82. Bulletin, June 24, 1912.

83. Bulletin, October 5, 1912.

84. Bulletin, June 29, 1912.

85. Bulletin, June 29, 1912.

86. Bulletin, July 29, 1912.

87. Bulletin, August 27, 1912. A list of plays produced by the Winnipeg Stock Company is included in Appendix E.

In February, the Winnipeg Stock Company moved to the Star Theatre in Saskatoon and were followed on the Lyceum stage by the Empress Players from Vancouver. However, upon their arrival in Edmonton the troupe was renamed the Lyceum Stock Company.⁸⁸ According to the Bulletin, the new company believed that their theatre-going public would like to see some of the plays that had made people laugh or weep during the past twenty years. Therefore, instead of concentrating on newer dramatic successes as their predecessors had done, the troupe emphasized old standards.⁸⁹ Their engagement ran for three months from the middle of February to the middle of May.⁹⁰

In May the Lyceum Stock Company left for Saskatoon and were succeeded by the Toronto Stock Company, the last stock organization to hold the boards there in 1913.⁹¹

Between 1909 and 1914 a number of other theatres in Edmonton staged plays and musical comedies. However, none of these theatres ever carried on such a programme for as long as either the Empire Theatre or the Lyceum Theatre. All of the productions in the other houses were on a smaller scale than those of the two main playhouses. Advertising and reviewing of these shows were sporadic so that it has been impossible to construct an accurate chronological list of productions.

In 1909 the Allen Stock Company continued at the Dominion Theatre

88. Bulletin, January 30, 1913.

89. Bulletin, February 17, 1913.

90. A list of plays produced by the Lyceum Stock Company is included in Appendix E.

91. Bulletin, May 10, 1913. A list of plays produced by the Toronto Stock Company is included in Appendix E.

until the end of February. Although not as popular as the various stock groups that played the two big houses, the Allen Players with Verna Felton as the star, scored several successes during the two months.⁹² After the Allen Stock Company concluded their engagement, vaudeville returned to the Dominion's stage.

In September, 1909, the management of the Orpheum Theatre announced that the playhouse would pass from vaudeville production into a full-fledged dramatic house with a first-class company, whose object it would be to maintain a permanent home for drama in Edmonton.⁹³ For two months, in September and October, 1909, the Orpheum Players specialized in melodramas, none of which had lost their favor with Edmontonians.⁹⁴ In November, the Orpheum again changed its policy and became a full time movie house.⁹⁵

In January, 1912, the Majestic Theatre converted into a dramatic playhouse. The Della Pringle Stock Company held the boards there from January until the fall of 1912. The advertising for the theatre was sporadic and the newspaper notices were inconsistent so that a complete list of productions cannot be obtained. In May of 1913, the Majestic Musical Comedy Company made its bow to Edmonton audiences and until the third week in June produced musical comedy.⁹⁶

92. A list of plays produced by the Allen Stock Company is included in Appendix E.

93. Bulletin, September 2, 1909.

94. Bulletin, September 17, 1909.

95. Bulletin, November 20, 1909. A list of plays produced by the Orpheum Players is included in Appendix E.

96. Lists of plays produced by the Della Pringle Stock Company and the Majestic Musical Comedy Company that are available are included in Appendix E.

The old Thistle Rink stage was called into service from time to time also. In December of 1909, Vernon Barford, a local musician and amateur dramatist, issued a subscription list to determine whether an appearance by one of the greatest concert singers of the day,⁹⁷ Madame Melba, would be a lucrative venture in Edmonton.⁹⁸ The survey must have been successful for in August of the following year the Bulletin commented upon the enthusiasm with which Edmontonians were looking forward to the forthcoming appearance.⁹⁹ Late in September, Edmontonians were informed that reserved seats in Thistle Rink for the performance of the Great Melba would be five dollars, four dollars and three dollars, the highest admission prices yet charged in Edmonton for any entertainment.¹⁰⁰ As newspaper articles proliferated regarding the singer and her tour, citizens in Edmonton were informed that such enthusiasm as had never been witnessed at the Walker Theatre in Winnipeg occurred when Melba entranced an audience which filled every corner in the immense house.¹⁰¹ Her concert in October, 1910, well warranted the great fame and extravagant praise that had preceded her to Edmonton. The Bulletin recorded that Melba's singing was a revelation of the possibilities of the human voice:

Spellbound, with half suspended breathing, one listened to the glorious trills which fell caressingly from her lips, filling the air with emotion, or, as in the more florid passages one was swept away with notes full of

97. Bulletin, December 11, 1909.

98. Bulletin, December 11, 1909.

99. Bulletin, August 18, 1910.

100. Bulletin, September 26, 1910.

101. Bulletin, September 30, 1910.

sensuous delight as they poured tumultuously forth a veritable Niagara of glorious sound.¹⁰²

In July of 1911, the stage of the Thistle Rink saw the Great Professor Mental and his associates with a program of hypnotism, mind reading, magic, songs, magnetism and illusion.¹⁰³ His reputation as a conjurer filled the house for three nights. When the Professor caused his assistant to rise in the air without any support, he had everyone in Edmonton talking and putting forth many and varied explanations of invisible wires and electric magnets. His psychic demonstrations, too, were a show in themselves.¹⁰⁴

Never in the history of Western Canada had so many of the world's foremost singers been heard together than in October of 1911 when Thistle Rink played host to Alice Neilson, of the Boston Opera Company; Ricardo Martin, principal tenor at Covent Garden;¹⁰⁵ Jeska Swartz, prima donna contralto of the Boston Opera; Johanna Morella, soprano of the Royal Italian Opera Company; Jose Mordennes, basso of the Boston Grand Opera Company; Rudolpho Fornari, baritone of the same company; and Luggi Cilla, tenor of the Boston Opera Company.¹⁰⁶ Although neither the stars, Alice Neilson nor Ricardo Martin, had reached the apogee of their respective careers, they and the other singers, gave intense pleasure to a highly

102. Bulletin, October 6, 1910.

103. Bulletin, June 29, 1911.

104. Bulletin, July 7, 1911.

105. Bulletin, September 2, 1911.

106. Bulletin, September 9, 1911.

appreciative house at the Rink.¹⁰⁷ January of 1912, another enthusiastic audience at the Rink greeted the famous Royal Moelwyn Welsh Choir of twenty-seven members from North Wales.¹⁰⁸

The decade before the First World War was the heyday for travelling circuses in the Northwest as well as troupes of dramatic companies. Always popular with audiences these travelling menageries of color and spectacle never failed to generate as much excitement as the most spectacular musical comedy or the most moving of dramas. In 1909 the C. W. Parker Shows presented "Wonderland," an attraction modelled on the same idea as Coney Island or White City.¹⁰⁹ With the regular circus acts, "Wonderland" presented the largest trained wild animal circus in the world.¹¹⁰ The Parker Shows returned in August of 1911, this time with the distinction of being the largest amusement company in the world,¹¹¹ and again in May of 1912.¹¹²

In the same month the Cole Brothers Circus set up their mammoth circus tent. While presenting nothing novel, according to the Bulletin, the various acts were given by the cleverest artists in their respective classes. No circus would be complete without the odd scuffle with the law. Coles' Circus filled the bill in this respect too. It was necessary for Edmonton's police chief to close several games of chance that were in

107. Bulletin, October 7, 1911.

108. Bulletin, January 2, 1912.

109. Bulletin, July 10, 1909.

110. Bulletin, August 12, 1909.

111. Bulletin, August 8, 1911.

112. Bulletin, May 22, 1912.

progress in connection with side shows. Apparently these were worked innocently enough when police officers were nearby, but at other times a number of unwary participants were cheated.¹¹³

The L. G. Barnes Big Three Ring Trained Animal Show came to Edmonton in August of 1910¹¹⁴ and July of 1912.¹¹⁵ This show was slightly different from a regular circus as it consisted entirely of trained animals.¹¹⁶

Markle, Bell and Walker's Dog and Pony Show, with thirty-one trained animal actors, and introducing the only trained moose in the world, drew crowds for three days in May of 1910.¹¹⁷ This organization was followed in August by McPhee's World's Best Dog and Pony Show, also for a three day engagement.¹¹⁸

The Sells-Floto Circus came in July of 1912.¹¹⁹ The following year brought the Oklahoma Ranch Show which featured dare-devil riding and roping stars;¹²⁰ the Kennedy Shows;¹²¹ and Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Pawnee Bill's Far East Show. As an indication of the size of Buffalo Bill's show, the Bulletin noted that it required more space for its arena than any other amusement enterprise then travelling. Buffalo Bill appeared at

113. Bulletin, August 2, 1909.

114. Bulletin, April 4, 1910.

115. Bulletin, July 20, 1912.

116. Bulletin, April 4, 1910.

117. Bulletin, May 25, 1910.

118. Bulletin, August 18, 1910.

119. Bulletin, July 31, 1912.

120. Bulletin, June 28, 1913.

121. Bulletin, June 30, 1913.

every performance and delivered a short address fitted to the occasion, while the programme covered everything in the way of heroic riding and roping exploits.¹²²

The lecture continued as popular a form of entertainment as ever. Usually lectures still treated either a religious-moral or a travel theme. The most famous lecturer in the first category was William Jennings Bryan who filled Thistle Rink in October of 1909 with lectures on "The Prince of Peace."¹²³ Father Simard spoke in the Immaculate Conception Church in April of the following year on "The Pope and His Authority." Rev. Simard had just returned from an eight year residence in Rome.¹²⁴ April brought two other speakers in the persons of Rev. Geo. H. Hibbert, of Massachusetts who was a temperance lecturer of continental reputation;¹²⁵ and Mr. G. Rogers, a temperance lecturer, who spoke in the Orpheum Theatre on "Departing Spirits."¹²⁶ February of 1911 brought C. Jinarajadasa, lecturer from Ceylon, who gave an address on Theosophy called "The Roads to God."¹²⁷ Later the same year, Professor George Jackson of Victoria University, the man who previously had created a great stir in theological circles by his lectures on the Old Testament, spoke of "Great Preachers of Yesterday and Today."¹²⁸

122. Bulletin, July 18, 1913.

123. Bulletin, October 12, 1909.

124. Bulletin, April 4, 1910.

125. Bulletin, April 9, 1910.

126. Bulletin, April 25, 1910.

127. Bulletin, February 22, 1911.

128. Bulletin, June 1, 1911.

Travelogue lectures included an illustrated speech by Agnes Dean Cameron called "A Woman's Trip to the Arctic" in 1909; a lecture in 1910 by Lieutenant Sir Ernest Shackleton on his search for the South Pole;¹²⁹ an illustrated lecture on Japan given by Mrs. Dr. Crux, also in 1910;¹³⁰ an address by John P. Glum, who took as his subject, "California the Land of Sunshine and Flowers,"¹³¹ in 1911; and an illuminated lecture by Rev. J. S. Short, entitled, "Through Burns' and Scott's Country," later the same year.¹³²

There were lectures which did not fit into either religious or travel category. In 1910, for example, Alexander Stuart delivered a lecture entitled "A House Divided and Abraham Lincoln" which was a scholarly and graphic account of the causes of the Civil War in the United States.¹³³ Later in 1910, Mr. Sonet, a graduate of the University of Lyons, spoke on "The Pioneers of New France."¹³⁴ In the fall Colonel Pugmire, the Salvation Army's Singing Evangelist, gave a lecture called "Life Within Prison Walls" followed shortly after by Rev. J. L. Gordon's "Grace, Grit and Greenbacks" and "Peculiar People Whom I Have Met." The Bulletin claimed that words could not convey the ringing tones of the lecturer's magnificent voice as he drove each well-thought argument home or the effect on the hearer when held spellbound in the grip of some powerful, compelling

129. Bulletin, May 27, 1910.

130. Bulletin, October 19, 1910.

131. Bulletin, October 31, 1911.

132. Bulletin, September 11, 1911.

133. Bulletin, March 2, 1910.

134. Bulletin, April 13, 1910.

idea.¹³⁵ In 1912, pictures shown on a screen by a stereopticon illustrated a large number of paintings during the lecture "Bocklin, the German Artist" delivered by Dr. Dyde.¹³⁶

The Edmonton Amateurs were the most active in local theatricals between 1909 and 1913. In 1909 the group performed in Patience at the Edmonton Opera House. The production was so well appreciated that the cast took three curtain calls at the end of the first act.¹³⁷ In September the amateur company performed in Tom Thumb's Wedding and Old Maid's Convention in Thistle Rink for the benefit of the YWCA building fund. The latter play was quite spectacular involving three hundred fifty children and thirty old maids.¹³⁸

In 1910 the Edmonton Amateur Dramatic Society played in Lady Huntworth's Experiment at the Empire Theatre.¹³⁹ Later in January, they produced their first Shakespearean production, Twelfth Night. In the fall of the same year, under the direction of A. E. Nash¹⁴⁰ the group produced Mrs. Corring's Necklace.¹⁴¹ Mr. Nash directed the Amateurs again the following year in The Tyranny of Tears with which they won the Dominion Drama Festival's Earl Grey Trophy.¹⁴² A production of The Liars at the

135. Bulletin, November 23, 1910.

136. Bulletin, January 13, 1912.

137. Bulletin, May 27, 1910.

138. Bulletin, June 5, 1909.

139. Bulletin, January 18, 1910.

140. Bulletin, September 10, 1910.

141. Bulletin, September 10, 1910.

142. Journal, November 5, 1959

Empire in December¹⁴³ was followed in the spring of 1911 by Alice in Wonderland at the Lyceum, previously discussed.¹⁴⁴ The Tyranny of Tears was repeated in April. Although the Bulletin claimed that the production lacked verve, it nevertheless went on to the Dominion Drama Festival.¹⁴⁵

In the five year period preceding the First World War the motion picture made its greatest strides in technical advancement and popularity. Eleven new movie houses were opened in Edmonton between 1909 and 1913: The Starland in August¹⁴⁶ and the Orpheum in November of 1909;¹⁴⁷ the Elite¹⁴⁸ and Le Grand in September,¹⁴⁹ the New Bijou in October¹⁵⁰ and the Majestic in November of 1910;¹⁵¹ the Garland in January of 1912;¹⁵² the Dreamland in July,¹⁵³ the Monarch¹⁵⁴ and the Empress in August¹⁵⁵ and the Gem in October of 1913.¹⁵⁶

143. Bulletin, March 23, 1911.

144. Bulletin, March 23, 1911.

145. Bulletin, April 12, 1911.

146. Bulletin, August 9, 1909.

147. Bulletin, November 20, 1909.

148. Bulletin, September 3, 1910.

149. Bulletin, September 29, 1910.

150. Bulletin, October 22, 1910.

151. Bulletin, November 14, 1910.

152. Bulletin, January 19, 1912.

153. Bulletin, July 27, 1913.

154. Bulletin, August 8, 1913.

155. Bulletin, August 26, 1913.

156. Bulletin, October 8, 1913.

This new movement in entertainment did not creep in unnoticed. Critics were well aware that the motion picture was taking the place of many touring companies. But critics in Edmonton, at any rate, did not realize the extent of the domination motion pictures would exercise. What they did see was good:

The doom of that dramatic atrocity the Number 2, 3 and 4 company, the cheaply engaged and poorly staged aggregation that has been accustomed to circle the smaller cities with presentations of sad versions of the big successes of the New York season, has been sealed.

No longer will the theatre-goer of the little one-night stand have to pay good money to see a group of bad actors and actresses who might have been excellent plumbers and waitresses, perform sundry vicious and cruel operations upon dramatic and musical offerings that have made metropolitan hits.

The death knell of these money grabbing companies has been sounded by Klaw and Krlanger, who in former years have played a prime part in furthering the crime they are now about to expiate. And it is our good friends, the movies, that are...the instrument of the long overdue execution of the number 4.¹⁵⁷

The first color movies came to Edmonton in 1911. A pastoral scene with cattle and farm houses and men, "all alive and presenting ever-changing groups, the most delicate tint of a girl's face, every shade of color in the fluttering leaves, the blue sky, the waving grain, the

157. Bulletin, May 17, 1913.

placid water,"¹⁵⁸ were reproduced through the new process called Kinemacolor.¹⁵⁹ The article in the Bulletin added that the innovation presented at Thistle Rink represented the same breadth of advance as was previously marked between the fine black and white pictures of the day and the flickering peep-hole penny-worth of the original kinetoscope.¹⁶⁰

In 1912 Kinemacolor reproductions of the Durbar ceremonies by which King George V and Queen Mary had the titles of the Emperor and Empress of India officially bestowed upon them were shown at the Empire Theatre.¹⁶¹ A large audience, headed by Lieutenant Governor Bulyea, turned out to see the spectacular event: "Words cannot express the beauty or wonder of these colored moving pictures," wrote the Bulletin.

A riot of color, glitter of cloth of gold, flash of jewel
and over all the dazzling radiance of an Indian sun all
combine to make the scene one of unsurpassed beauty and
radiance.¹⁶²

In the spring of 1913 the Bulletin informed its readers that reports continued to come of the sensational success of the new Edison talking pictures which were due to reach Edmonton in the course of a few weeks. The paper prophesied that the possibilities would appear to be endless for the new invention along entertainment, scientific and educational lines.¹⁶³ In another article the paper described the new invention as

158. Bulletin, October 25, 1911.

159. Bulletin, October 25, 1911.

160. Bulletin, October 25, 1911.

161. Bulletin, July 17, 1912.

162. Bulletin, July 30, 1912.

163. Bulletin, April 5, 1913.

using the same screen as in "ordinary" moving pictures, but with a square opening cut through the bottom from which the sounds were projected synchronously with the movements depicted on the screen.¹⁶⁴

The "talkie" had a semi-private showing in Edmonton to a select audience of newspaper men and women in April of 1913. The Bulletin felt that when the general public saw the device, it would be disappointed, for the characteristic tones of a gramophone were easily recognized. However, the Bulletin added, the perfect accord between the movements of the pictures and the sounds and words spoken and sung were truly wonderful.¹⁶⁵

The reporter was quite wrong in his estimation of the talkies' acceptance in Edmonton. When the general public was shown them for the first time the following month, the Bulletin noted the enthusiastic reception:

'I've been clapping my hands as if for real actors,' exclaimed a little woman at the Empire Theatre yesterday as she glanced around her apprehensively to see if her unstinted applause of the talking motion pictures...had made her conspicuous. Her concern was unnecessary, however, as the illusion that the shadow actors were materialized due to the perfect harmony of action and voice, was shared by the capacity houses....¹⁶⁶

In the first scene of this first talking picture a man walked into camera range, bowed to the audience, and then made a statement after the

164. Bulletin, April 10, 1913.

165. Bulletin, April 26, 1913.

166. Bulletin, May 7, 1913.

manner of a circus announcer, telling about the labors of Mr. Edison in perfecting the machine. He predicted that the action and the voice of the world's greatest artists in the drama, in opera and concert, would be preserved for reproduction before audiences of generations to come. He then blew a tin horn and dropped a dinner plate on the floor. Another man entered, sat down at a piano and played, and a woman accompanied him on the violin.¹⁶⁷

With the motion picture came censorship. In 1913, a censorship department was established by the Government of Alberta. The same year the new department condemned its first film, The Law Breakers. In contravention to the Act, the Monarch Theatre continued to show the film which resulted in its confiscation.¹⁶⁸ The censorship department was originally set up as a result of a set of films which depicted the murder of a New York police detective.¹⁶⁹ The films had been previously shown in Calgary. Acting on the advice of the attorney-general, the police chief of that city attended a showing and recommended that the films be subjected to a rigid censoring. A committee from the Children's Aid Department was thus appointed to look after this and future films.¹⁷⁰

167. Bulletin, April 10, 1913.

168. Bulletin, December 22, 1913.

169. Bulletin, February 8, 1913.

170. Bulletin, February 12, 1913.

PROSPECT

After the outbreak of war in 1914 there was a slowing down in theatrical activity in Edmonton. Heavy enlistment, the cessation of immigration and the completion of railway construction resulted in a decrease in the city's population.¹ Nevertheless, during the war, a number of stage celebrities did visit the city. When peace returned there was a marked revival in theatrical affairs.

Martin-Harvey arrived in the city in the spring of 1914 and presented The Only Way, The Breed of the Treshams and The Cigarette Maker's Romance. In May, Lawrence Irving and his wife Mabel Hackney rose to great emotional heights in the play Typhoon and followed it with powerful productions of The Lily and The Unwritten Law. The year 1914 also saw the Stratford-on-Avon Players, headed by Frank Benson perform in The Merry Wives of Windsor, The Taming of the Shrew, The Merchant of Venice and Hamlet.

The remaining war years brought such celebrities to Edmonton as Johnstone Forbes-Robertson who came on his farewell tour and appeared in The Light That Failed, The Passing of the Third Floor Back and Hamlet; Cyril Maude who brought one of his successes, Grumpy to the Empire; Phyllis Neilson Terry, who according to Bulmer Watt, carried on the acting traditions of her distinguished family admirably in the play, The Land of Promises;² Albert Brown's English Company which produced The Black Feather,³ A Little Bit of Fluff⁴ and Too Many Cooks;⁵ and the

1. Watt, Journal, September 29, 1949.

2. Ibid.

3. Bulletin, February 5, 1916.

4. Bulletin, February 9, 1916.

5. Bulletin, February 20, 1916.

San Carlo Opera Company which made the first of several visits and impressed Edmontonians with Carmen, Madame Butterfly and Lucia di Lammermoor.⁶

In the immediate post-war period the most popular visitors included The Dumbells who came back several times and were given an enthusiastic welcome each time. The New York Theatre Guild Company came soon after the Dumbells' first appearance and produced John Ferguson starring Robert Forsyth and Angela McCahill. About the same time the Devereux Players scored successes with The Marriage Proposal, The Romancers, A School for Scandal and Arms and the Man. The company had among its leading members John Charles Thomas and Carolyn Thompson. The troupe returned shortly afterwards in Seventeen and Maytime.⁷

By 1920, the need for a commodious and comfortable playhouse in Edmonton became acute for the old Empire had deteriorated quite considerably. The newly formed Trans-Canada Organization undertook to fill the need and started sending companies across the Dominion while building operations on the new Empire Theatre were still underway. One of the last of the greater names in theatre to appear at the old structure was Tyrone Power, the father of the motion picture star.⁸ Mr. Power played in The Servant in the House and The Little Brother.⁹

"A dream of long years was realized for Edmontonians," reminisced Bulmer Watt, "when the New Empire Theatre was opened in December of 1920."¹⁰

6. Watt, Journal, September 29, 1949.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

The opening attraction, The Maid of the Mountains, was a strong war-time favorite in England. The two leading principals of the production were Viva Doran and Fred Wright, a comedian of long standing from Britain.¹¹

In December of 1920 and January of 1921, two plays staged by David Belasco and produced by Comstock and Gest played the New Empire.¹² The first was The Wanderer and the second Tiger Rose. Both productions were staged in the famous Belasco style: characters for example, went off stage to rooms that were completely furnished despite the fact that no member of the audience ever saw them.¹³ Audiences were awed by "the most beautiful Alberta Sunrise and Electric Storm ever staged,"¹⁴ in Tiger Rose.

Martin-Harvey returned in 1921 in one of his greatest successes The Burgomaster of Stilemond. Audiences in Edmonton found the play intensely moving.¹⁵ Sir John made other visits to Edmonton in 1924 and 1926¹⁶ and produced plays of great variety, the most elaborate being Oedipus Rex. Unfortunately, however, Bulmer Watt recalled that the horror of the Greek drama proved little to the taste of the Edmonton audience.¹⁷

Later in the twenties Edmontonians had the opportunity of seeing Matheson Lang, according to Bulmer Watt, then at his best in The Wandering

11. Watt, Journal, September 29, 1949.

12. Bulletin, December 9, 1920.

13. Sillito, Community and University Theatre, p. 33.

14. Bulletin, December 9, 1920.

15. Watt, Journal, September 30, 1949.

16. Sillito, Community and University Theatre, p. 29.

17. Watt, Journal, September 30, 1949.

Jew which made a deep impression.¹⁸ The mid 1920's also brought Sir Seymour Hicks and his wife Ellaine Terriss in Mr. What's His Name and The Man in Dress Clothes; and Canadian actress, Julia Arthur, then near the end of a career of much distinction, in G. B. Shaw's Saint Joan.¹⁹

Maurice Colborne came first in 1928 and returned many times thereafter playing Shaw almost entirely. He had admirable support from such notables as Barry Jones and Margaret Rawlings. Mr. Colbourne's company was one of the last of those to have extended engagements at the New Empire. In between his engagements Edmontonians had the privilege of seeing Sir Barry Jackson, later the Director of the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon in England, in The Barretts of Wimpole Street, Yellow Sands, Dear Brutus and Quality Street.

After the Depression the road companies that came to Edmonton were few and far between. One of these last was that headed by Ethel Barrymore, who portrayed vividly, according to Bulmer Watt, the grandmother in a play founded on Mazo de la Roche's Jalna stories.²⁰ The Orpheum Circuit returned to the New Empire for a year or so and the Pantages was kept going for some time after that. The age of the road in the Northwest was over. Soon, even vaudeville disappeared "into the limbo of time."²¹

Bulmer Watt wondered, in 1949, whether or not Edmonton would ever again see a theatrical era such as had just passed.²² Twenty years later we might still wonder. With motion pictures and television reigning su-

18. Watt, Journal, September 30, 1949.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

preme over the entertainment scene the chances seem very remote indeed. Perhaps the age of the road will never return. Outside of the frequent visits of the Canadian Players from Stratford, Canada and those of the Banff School of Fine Arts, Edmonton sees little outside theatre even today. However, within the last few years there seems to have been a re-awakening of interest in theatre in the city. Such groups as the Walterdale Players and the Citadel Theatre certainly have been greatly responsible for this renewed interest. With the completion of the Jubilee Auditorium, the number of road companies visiting the city is on the increase. The standard of production has remained relatively high with such plays produced in the last few years as Love for Love starring Sir Lawrence Olivier, Camelot and Fiddler on the Roof. The Road will perhaps never again achieve its past importance as a theatrical genre, but it appears that it is not yet ready to die altogether.

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Appendices

Appendix "A"

Empire Circuit Vaudeville and Kinetoscope Bills

at the Empire Theatre,

January 11, 1909 to June 3, 1909.

Week Starting Mon, Jan. 11	EMPIRE THEATRE 3rd St., Just North of Jasper	Modern Vaudeville
— ANOTHER BIG BILL —		
YBUR The Handcuff Queen in Her Sensational Act.	Signor Joseph St. Claire European Novelty Harp Soloist.	
WEAVER & WILLIAMS Refined Entertainers and Character Artists.	Grant Churchill & Co. In Their Industrial Playlet, "The Billionaire."	
THE DeCOMAS World Famed Sensational and Comedy Acrobats.	DAVE "CASTON" The Australian Comedian.	
A. A. T. ROBERTS Rendering Illustrated Songs.	THE KINETOSCOPE Empire Moving Pictures.	
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA —Popular Opera Selections.		
PRICES —Evening, 15c, 25c, 35c, 50c. Matinee—10c, 20c, 25c.		
Box Office open 10.00 a. m. to 10.00 p. m.		
Seats reserved by telephone—Phone 2185.		

Week Starting Monday February 1st.	Empire Theatre 3rd St., Just North of Jasper	Modern Vaudeville.
AL. LUTTRINGER, LILLIAN LUCAS & CO. , in their comedy dramatic sketch, "A Girl of the West."	CAMPBELL & McDONALD , in their original Scottish singing and dancing act.	
STEELE & McMASTERS , Comedy Acrobats and roller skaters. Something new and original.	LES BOLLINGERS , Original Parisian Rag Painters. Replete with novelty and Comedy.	
JOSEPH O'BRIEN , the one-armed wonder of the age. Baton and gun juggler.	JOHN NELSON , Character Comedian and Cartoonist.	
A. A. T. ROBERTS , Latest Illustrated Songs.	THE KINETOSCOPE , Latest Moving pictures.	
Empire Orchestra , direction Thos. Irving—Overture—"Light Cavalry."		
Prices —Evening 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c.		
Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. Seats reserved by phone 2185.		

Week Starting Monday January 23rd.	Empire Theatre 3rd St., Just North of Jasper	Modern Vaudeville.
JOHNSTON & JOHNSTON , Ventriloquist artists, featuring MISS MABLE JOHNSTON , the World's greatest Lady Ventriloquist. CAROLINE CASSE , Operatic Contralto.	THE LA DARROS Great Novelty Unsupported Lady Act. Two of the cleverest artists in the world.	
LA GALLE AND LIND , Club Jugglers Extraordinary. The only team in America passing eight clubs.	WILSON & WILBUR , In their original singing and dancing act, "Something Different."	
A. A. T. ROBERTS , Rendering "Mary My Heather Queen."	LEW GLICK , Impersonator—In his own original act.	
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA , Selections from "Raymond."	THE KINETOSCOPE , The latest Moving Pictures.	
PRICES —Evenings, 15, 25, 35 and 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.		
Seats reserved by telephone.		

Week Starting
Monday
February 21st.

Empire Theatre

3rd St., Just North of Jasper

Modern
Vaudeville.
Phone 2123.

ANOTHER GRAND BILL.

THE HAYDEN FAMILY—Marvelous
Tight Wire Artists. A real feature
act.

THE SCOTCH MACKS—Glasgow's fa-
vorite Singers and Dancers. "The
Real Thing."

ROBZART—Original Singing Specialties
and Impersonations.

THE KINETOSCOPE—Latest Moving
Pictures.

FOUR ENGLISH BELLES—Sensational
Costume Change, Singers and Dancers.

CHINESE WALTON—Oriental Magi-
cian.

A. A. T. ROBERTS—Latest Illustrated
Songs.

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Thomas
Irving. Overture—Ludspfel.

PRICES—Evenings, 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee, 10, 20, 25c. Seats reserved by phone.
Phone 2123. Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

Week Starting
Mon., Feb. 18th.

Empire Theatre

3rd St., Just North of Jasp

Modern
Vaude-
Pho

BETTER THAN EVER.

THE HICKMAN-MILLER CO., pre-
sented their clever comedy sketch,
"Twins." A scream all the way.

FERN & MACK, the ex-Collegians,
funny comedians and laugh producers,
supreme.

MONTANA JACK & MARITANA, the
world's greatest sharpshooters and
knife throwers in their sensational
act.

A. A. T. ROBERTS latest Illustrated
Songs.

MUSICAL BENTLEY, Xylophone Solo-
ist. Absolutely unique and without a
rival.

MAZIE MARTELL, Singing Soubrette
and Comedienne.

JOE KELCEY, Black-face Comedian
and Dancer.

The Kinetoscope Empire Moving Pic-
tures.

Empire Orchestra; Dir. Thos. Irving; Overture Titania—Hildreth.

PRICES—Evenings 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats res- by tele-
phoning 2123. Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

Week Starting
Monday,
Feb. 22nd.

Empire Theatre

3rd St., Just North of Jasper

Modern
Vaudeville.
Phone 2123.

A CHACKERJACK BILL.

DONAT REDINI and his Acrobatic **HALL & COLBURN**—The Swede and
Doza Jim and Jam European feature
act par excellence. "The Happy Girl."

McGLOTH & SNELLY, "The Dandy **ST. PIERRE BROS.**, Novelty Acrobats.
Dancers." Special scenery and effects.

JESSIE DALE, Phenomenal Baritone. **AUSTIN & SWEET**, In their nonsensi-
cal skit "The Bell-Boy and the
Actress."

A. A. T. ROBERTS, rendering "There's **THE KINETOSCOPE**—Latest moving
Room to Rent in My Heart for You." Pictures.

Empire Orchestra, Dir. Thos. Irving. Overture, Hungarian Lutsplol Kater-Tal-
PRICES—Evenings 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats reserved by tele-
phoning 2123. Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

Week Starting March 1st.	Empire Theatre 3rd St. Just North of Jasper.	Modern Vaudeville. Phone 2185.
ANOTHER ALL-STAR BILL.		
Special engagement of THE GREAT RUSTICANA TRIO , Italian Musicians and Street Singers.	THE HORRISSES , In Musical Comedy, "The Substitute" featuring their Big Band, playing 12 instruments at one time.	
THE GREAT KINSNERS , European Equilibrists and Balancers.	CHAS. H. SANDERS , Singing Comedian "The Man of the Hour."	
THE LENOIRS , Mind Readers Extraordinary.	JAY PAIGE , Original Clay Modeller. The Kinetoscope, Empire Moving Pictures "The Devil," "Mountains in Rome."	
JOSEPHINE TREMBLEY , Rendering "Stingy Moon."		
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA , Dir. Thos. Irving. Overture, Sembrando—Recessional.		
PRICES —Evening 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats may be reserved in advance by 'phoning 2185. Box Office open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.		

Week Starting March 8th.	Empire Theatre 3rd St. Just North of Jasper.	Modern Vaudeville. Phone 2185.
EVERY ACT A FEATURE.		
ELLA GARRISON & CO. , High-class Travesty Act.	PETRIE & BUDD , Eccentric Comedians.	
The CLUXTON TRIO , Laughable Comedy sketch "The Circus Rider."	BERT WOODS , Ventriloquist.	
THE BARRYS , Comedians—"Something Different."	BILLY DAXTER , Black Face Comedian.	
ARTHUR GRAHAM , Latest Illustrated Song.	THE KINETOSCOPE , Empire Moving Pictures.	
Empire Orchestra —Dir. Thos. Irving—Overture "Youth and Riches," Whiting.		
PRICES —Evening 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats may be reserved a week in advance by 'phoning 2185. Box Office open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.		

Week starting Monday, March 18th.	Empire Theatre 3rd St. Just North of Jasper.	Modern Vaudeville. Phone 2185.
Extra attraction RIAGNETO Electrical Wizard.		
Presenting the most amusing exhibition with electricity the world has ever seen. Lights handkerchiefs with his hair—gas with the tips of his tongue—cigarettes with the tip of his finger. The greatest sensation in vaudeville!		
SMILETTA BROS. , Comedy Gymnasts.	DE FOGGI & LANE —"The Yama Yama Girls."	
THE GREAT ZERADOS , Musical Trapeze artists supreme.	WENRICK & WALDRON —The boys who sing and talk.	
MONTE LA CROSSE , Terpsichorean artist.	ARTHUR GRAHAM —Latest Illustrated song.	
Empire Orchestra , Dir. Thos. Irving. Overture "Jolly Hobbers" Franz von Suppe.		
PRICES —Evening 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats may be reserved a week in advance by 'phoning 2185. Box Office open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.		

WEEK COMMENCING	Empire Theatre Phone 2185.	MONDAY MARCH 22nd.
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THELMA DEVERINE & CO., featuring the phenomenal baritone, Thelma Deverine
 THE MARATHON COMEDY FOUR—In their unique and original act
 STORY & VAN—Xylophone experts.
 TEMPLE and O'BRIEN—Comedy singers and dancers.
 BELLEFONT SISTERS—Parisian Model "Le reve des artistes" (The Artist's dream).
 W. B. KELLY—"The Whistling Kid." Monologue, song, and lip whistling.
 ARTHUR GRAHAM—rendering "Let me Call you Sweetheart once again."
 THE KINETOSCOPE—"Half Saturday Off"—"A Pleasant Evening at the Theatre"
 EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Thos. Irving Overture "Jolly Robbers"—Franz von Su
 PRICES—Evenings 15c, 25c, 35c 50c. Matinee 10c, 20c.
 Box office open 10.00 a. m., to 10 p. m. Seats may be reserved a week in advance
 by phoning 2185.

WEEK STARTING MONDAY MARCH 23.	Empire Theatre Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.	PHONE 2185 MODERN VAUDEVILLE
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A SURE HIT BILL.

THE SHARROCKS "Nonsense and Second Sight."	THE MARATHON COMEDY FOUR (Retained by special Request) In an entirely New Sketch.
CARRICO & DUMAGE Singing, dancing, and Impersonations.	KNIGHT & BENSON Comedy Sketch "What Is It?"
THE TRAVIOLAS Loop Rollers Extraordinary.	ARTHUR GRAHAM Latest Pictured Melodica.
THE KINETOSCOPE Latest Empire Motion Picture	EMPIRE ORCHESTRA Direction—Thomas Irving.
Overture—"OPERO N"—Weber.	

PRICES—Evenings 15c, 25c, 35c 50c. Matinee 10c, 20c, 25c.
 Box office open 10.00 a. m., to 10 p. m. Seats may be reserved a week in advance
 by phoning 2185.

WEEK STARTING MONDAY APRIL 5th.	Empire Theatre Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.	PHONE 2185 MODERN VAUDEVILLE
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Engagement Extraordinary.

"HUNTRESS" Drapery dancer and impersonator. Most beautiful act in vaudeville.	MURRAY DOGS. Canine Miracles.
AERIAL WILSONS. Sensational trapeze artists.	BELLE & GREEN. Comedy sketch "The Chorus Girl."
SAM LETTA SISTERS. Wonderful Wire Artists and Contortionists.	DE CHANTRAL SISTERS. "The Sweet Singers."
	ARTHUR GRAHAM. Rendering "He Lives in a Little White House."

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA, Dir. T. Irving. Overture—Tannhauser March—Wagner.
 Prices—Evenings 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats may be reserved a
 week in advance by phoning 2185. Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

WEEK
STARTING
MONDAY
APRIL 12th.

EMPIRE THEATRE

Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.

PHONE 2185
MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

THE BEST EVER.

THE THREE MASQUERIA SISTERS—

Charming instrumentalists—singing, dancing, and change artistes. A great novelty—direct from New York.

THE DAVISES—America's greatest fancy shots. The only act of its kind in the world.

KOLD AND MILLER—German Comedians.

RENO AND AZORA—Comedy Acrobats.

MARTELLE AND FELLOWS—Dramatic sketch artists. "Woman's Defence."

ED DOLAN—Eccentric Comedian.

ARTHUR GRAHAM—Rendering "The Girl From the Golden West."

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Popular operatic selections.

THE KINETOSCOPE—"Planter's Wife," "Picturesque Switzerland."

Prices—Evenings 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats may be reserved a week in advance by phoning 2185. Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

WEEK
STARTING
MONDAY
APRIL 19TH.

EMPIRE THEATRE

Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.

PHONE 2185
MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

NEVER EXCELLED YET.

MACK ELLIOTT & CO.

Presenting their laughable comedy playlet, "The New Minister."

AMY GOTTLIEB & CO.

Star Comedy Sketch, "Government Bonds."

ZACH & ZACH,

Acrobats of real merit.

ARTHUR GRAHAM,

Rendering "Billy Dear."

Empire Orchestra, Dir. Theo. Irving.

Prices—Evenings 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinee 10, 20, 25c. Seats may be reserved a week in advance by phoning 2185. Box office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

ANGELA MAY,

Operatic Contralto, and J. Louis McAvoy, in their comic opera skit, "A Baby Grand."

GLADYS MIDDLETON,

Lightning Change Artists.

"KIPPY,"

German Comedian and Cartoonist.

THE KINETOSCOPE.

"Uncle's Clock"—"Venice and the Lagoon."

Overture, "La Sirene" Anker

WEEK
STARTING
MONDAY
APRIL 26th.

EMPIRE THEATRE

Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.

PHONE 2185
MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

AN EXTRA ATTRACTIVE OFFERING

ROBERT H. BENTHAM & CO.

Beautiful dramatic sketch, "The Story of the Rose."

MARIE HRODLICKA,

Bohemian Lyric Soprano, possessing the highest ranged voice in vaudeville.

LEO ST. CLMO,

"The Musical German."

ARTHUR GRAHAM,

Rendering "Youna"

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA, Dir. Theo. Irving—Popular Operatic Selections.

Prices—Evenings 15c, 25c, 35c, 50c. Matinee 10c, 20c, 25c.

Matinee on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 3.00 O'clock.

Box Office open 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. Seats reserved a week in advance.

LYNNE AND BONNIE HAZARD,

"The Musician and the Little Lady."

VERNE AND VERNE,

Australian Comedy Duo.

CLEVER CLARK,

Black wire juggler and equilibrist.

THE KINETOSCOPE,

"The White Man's Work."

"The Tramps and the Soup."

WEEK
STARTING
MONDAY,
MAY 3rd.

EMPIRE THEATRE

Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.

PHONE 2155
MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

THIS IS A REAL EYE-OPENER.

HERBERT O'CONNOR & CO.,

Five people—In an unusually effective playlet "The Midnight Guest."

FRED E. GLADISH and

MARY E. BLAKE,

In their original comedietta "A Jack and a Queen."

RAY SUTHARD,

Singing Comedista.

ARTHUR GRAHAM,

Rendering "In the Valley Where My Sally said Good-Bye."

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA, Dir. Thos. Ivri. Overture "Waltz of the Flowers."

Prices—Evenings 15c, 25c, 35c, 50c. Matinees, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 10c, 20c, 25c.

HEROLD THE GREAT,

World's Greatest Muscular Marvel.

BERT WIGGINS,

Imitations, Cartoonist and Juggler.

UPSIDE-DOWN TRIO,

Novelty Dancers.

THE KINETOSCOPE,

"How Jones Got Picked for Mayor."

"Superfluous Hair" Cover.

WEEK
STARTING
MONDAY,
MAY 10th.

EMPIRE THEATRE

Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.

PHONE 2155
MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

A CLASSY AND SENSATIONAL OFFERING.

SPECIAL

ATTRACTION EXTRAORDINARY.

SPECIAL

40

ROBERT'S RATS, CATS, AND DOGS.

40

Forty Rats, Cats, and Dogs, all working together. Absolutely unique and without an equal, the world over.

LE WITT, ASHMORE & CO.,

Presenting their farcial comedy.

"A Pair of White Ducks."

THE WILBURS,

Ventriloquists, Novelty, Art, Fun.

MISS BOBBY PULLIAM,

"The Scoubrette with topical songs."

THE KINETOSCOPE,

"Hypnotic Table"—"A Laundry."

MUSICAL IRVING,

"The one string player of one string players."

NADOLNY,

Eccentric Juggler, Comique.

ARTHUR GRAHAM,

Rendering "I'll Teach You How."

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA,

Popular Selections.

Prices—Evening, 15c, 25c, 35c, 50c. Matinees, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 10c, 20c, 25c. Phone 2155 for reserved seats.

WEEK
STARTING
MONDAY,
MAY 17th.

EMPIRE THEATRE

Third St., Just North of Jasper Ave.

PHONE 2155
MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

A RECORD BREAKER.

DOBLADO'S SEVEN TRAINED SHEEP and LOUIE, THE CLOWN PIG.

Only flock of trained sheep in the world. A laugh from start to finish.

DOROTHY LAMB & CO.,

Presenting "A Night with the Red-men."

THE ORIGINAL FISHERS,

Sensational acrobats and Centurionists.

ARTHUR GRAHAM,

Rendering "Panella."

DORANTO,

Musical Novelty, playing only genuine Chinese instruments.

JOHN BUCKLEY,

Funny talk and tick dancing.

STANLEY AND WEAVER,

Comedy wire artists.

Empire Orchestra, Dir. Thos. Ivri. Popular Operatic Selection.

Prices—Evening 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinees Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 10, 20, 25c.

WEEK
STARTING
MONDAY,
MAY 20th.

EMPIRE THEATRE

Third St. Just North of Jasper Ave.

PHONE 2125
MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

A REAL QUALITY BILL.

KURTIS & BUSSE.

And their trained Toy Terriers.
A wonderfully clever act.

TRYO COMEDY QUARTETTE.

High-Class fun and melody.

EDITH HANEY.

Character Songs and Dances.

ARTHUR GRAHAM.

Rendering "Just Some One."

LE WITT, ASHMORE & CO.

Special return engagement of three
favorite fun-makers.

THOMAS & PAYNE.

Sensational roller skate dancers.

JOHNNY HUGHES.

Character Comedian and Acrobatic
Dancer.

THE KINETOSCOPE.

Latest Motion Pictures.

Empire Orchestra, Director, Thos. Irving. Overture "The Newlyweds."

Prices—Evening, 15, 25, 35, 50c. Matinees, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday,
10, 20, 25c.

EMPIRE THEATRE

ALL THIS WEEK. PHONE 2125.

YOU CAN'T MISS THIS

THE ONE AND ONLY

John L. Sullivan and

Jake Kilrain

The World's Greatest Boxers
conting their own original fight.

BOBBY WATSON.

"That Eccentric Boxer"

LOWMAN & ST. CLAIR.

"Klasy Kohled Komedians"

LOUISE CAMERON.

Rendering "The Girl Who Threw Me
Down."

THE KINETOSCOPE.

Showing the original Gans-Herzog,
Carl-L-McKay, and Carl-L-Pyphie
Comedy Eight Pictures.

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA, Dir. Thos. Irving.

Latest Operatic Selections.

Positively No Advance in Prices.

Appendix "B"

Pantages Circuit Vaudeville and Moving Pictures Bills

at the Empire Theatre

September 16, 1912 to December 29, 1913

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

A GREAT BILL

CORDUA AND MAUD
LESTER AND SHANNON
DON AND THOMPSON
THE NAPLES TRIO
JACK OLIVER
SUTTON AND SUTTON
ALICE PINCKSTON
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA
EMPIRESCOPE

Sensational Equilibrists
Comedy Skit "Astrology"
"The Sailor and the Girl"
Harpists and Vocalists
Singing and Dancing Comedian
Comedy Novelty Act
Pictured Melody
Popular Selections
Motion Photography

PHONE 2185 FOR SEATS.

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

WEEK STARTING THURSDAY, SEPT. 9.

THE LUIGI PICARRO TROUPE..... European Acrobatic Marvels
CANARIS..... World-Famed Illusionist
RAMSDALL SISTERS..... Novelty Dancing
STILL CITY QUARTETTE..... Harmony, Comedy
YULE AND SIMPSON..... Comedy Sketch
CHARLES HIGGINS..... Violinist
ALICE PINCKSTON..... Pictured Melody
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA..... "Sunshine and Showers"
EMPIRESCOPE..... Motion Photography

PHONE 2185 FOR SEATS.

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

ANOTHER CRACKERJACK BILL

NEWHOLD AND ANNIE CARROLL..... Sensational Parallel bar artists
WILSON FRANKLYN AND CO..... Singing comedy sketch
"My Wife Won't Let Me"
WARREN AND BROCKWAY..... "The Musical Juggler"
THE VARSITY QUARTETTE..... "Comedy and Harmony"
KENNEDY & KENNEDY..... Singing, talking, dancing
ALICE PINCKSTON..... In Pictured Melodies
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA..... Overture "Northern Lights"
EMPIRESCOPE..... Latest in Motion Photography
MATINEES, MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY. PHONE 2185

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

AN ARTISTIC FEATURE BILL

SEYMOUR'S HAPPY FAMILY..... Most popular trained dogs in world
THE CLARKES..... Just married revelation on the Banjo
J. A. MACK & COMPANY..... Comedy Sketch "The Mother-in-Law"
ALICE PINCKSTON..... Special Vocal Offering
NED NYE..... "The funny, funny man"
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA..... Overture "The Goddess of Night"
Empirescope..... Latest Motion Photography
ALICE PINCKSTON..... Pictured Melody
MATINEES MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS, 3 p.m.

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

A "CLASSY" AND EXPENSIVE BILL

THE DONATELLA AND FACCENDA TROUPE

Novelty Vocalists and Instrumentalists

THE LEVOLOS Sensational Wm. Emil Brisk

SHAYNE AND KING Hebrew Comedians—"Singers of the Ghetto."

GEORGE WINFIELD AND COMPANY Comedy Sketch

Don't Your Wife

BUNCHU AND ALGER "The Kentucky Girls" Quick Change Songsters

EDYTHE STANLEY "The Piano Girls" Character Impersonator

ALICE PINCKSTON Edmonton's favorite Soprano. Pictured Melody

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA Director, Thos. Irving Popular Selections

EMPIRESCOPE Latest and Best in Motion Photography

MATINEES MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY at 2 p.m.

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

Another Empire Standard Bill

THE SIX HOBOES A Performing Comedy Sketch "On the Road."

MINA RESTOR AND CO "A Night in the Night."

LOUGHLIN'S PERFORMING DOGS A Collection of Canine Wonders

DEAS, REED AND DEAS Comedy, some dancing, some

comedy, some clothes

JACQUE GRENO The Parisian Balancing Wizard

ALICE PINCKSTON Edmonton's favorite Soprano. Pictured Melody

EMPIRESCOPE Latest and Best in Motion Photography

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA Thos. Irving Popular Selections

MATINEES MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY at 3 p.m.

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY, OCTOBER 16th.

LA BELLE HELENE And her troupe of leaping greyhounds

DOLLY The Diving Monkey

JOHN HEDGE And the wrestling Ponies "Banner" and "Madison."

W. B. HARVEY & CO., in his original offering "A Room Upside Down"

JARVIS, MANN and JURENDA Singers who certainly can sing

SWIFT & CASEY Eccentric Musical Comedians

ALICE PINCKSTON, rendering "Hoo-ee, Aint you coming out Tonight"

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA Overture—"Eagle's Nest."

EMPIRESCOPE Latest and Best in Motion Photography

PHONE
2185

EMPIRE

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

ANOTHER HIGH-CLASS VAUDEVILLE OFFERING.

DEL TORRELLI AND GLISSENDA..... "The Musical Clowns"
HERBERTS' DOGS AND CATS..... A Real Animal Novelty
EDDIE REDWAY AND GERTRUDE LAWRENCE

KEENE AND ADAMS..... "Rhode Island and Texas"
English Society Entertainers

JAMES R. WATERS..... Character Singing Comedian

ALICE PINCKSTON..... Rendering "Harvest Moon"

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Theo. Irving..... Popular Selections

EMPIRESCOPE..... "The Grand Canyon of Arizona"—"The Newly Weds"

MATINEES, MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY—3.00 P.M.

EDMONTON'S
LEADING
THEATRE

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THURSDAY and FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28th and 29th

Some exceptionally good motion pictures have been secured, and with the Illustrated Song, and full Empire Orchestra, will provide an enjoyable evening's entertainment.

THREE PERFORMANCES NIGHTLY—7.30 to 10.30 p.m.

ADMISSION..... 10 CENTS.

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY, NOV. 1ST.

TYROLEAN SEXTETTE..... Alpine Yodelers, Singers and Dancers.

FISCHER AND BURKHART..... Singers who compose their own songs.

THE THREE LUCIFERS..... European Singers and novelty dancers.

Mlle. EMERIE assisted by MONS. SILVERN On Roman Rinses

and Trapeze

CRENYON..... Ventriloquist and His Blackhead Family

ALICE PINCKSTON—Pictured Melody "Shine on Harvest Moon"

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Theo. Irving..... Popular Selections

EMPIRESCOPE—Mustard Plasters..... "Much Ado About Nothing"

MATINEE ON MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY, at 3 p.m.

Edmonton's
Leading
Theatre

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

ATTENTION FANS!!!

MOVING PICTURES of the WORLD'S CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL GAMES, between PITTSBURG "PIRATES" and DETROIT "TIGERS."

Will be shown at the Empire today, Friday, Saturday, Matinee and Night only.

Close views of the Mighty "Hans" Wagner, Ty Cobb, Fred Clark, Hugh Jennings, "Babe" Adams, Muffin, etc. See the \$100,000.00 Grand Stand and Forbes Field, Pittsburg, the enormous crowds, the teams warming up for practice and then the great game.

THURSDAY, FRIDAY SATURDAY MATINEE AND NIGHT ONLY.

YOU CAN'T MISS THIS

Edmonton's
Leading
Theatre

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY NOVEMBER 11TH.

THE GREAT FLORENZ FAMILY... Europe's Perfect Acrobatic Marvels
SCHRÖDES & CHAPELLE—Presenting Mc Mahon's Creation

THE FOUR AMERICAN GYPSY GIRLS... Singers Who Can Sing
HOWARD & LEWIS... "The Sinner and the Dutchman"

JACK DAVIS AND MABEL THORNDYKE... Comedy Relief Skaters

ALICE PINCKSTON, headlining "The Beach for Mine in 'Summer Time'"

THE EMPIRESCOPE... Latest and best in Motion Photography

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Thos. Irving... Overture—Raymond

MATINEE MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY AT 1.15 P.M.

Edmonton's
Leading
Theatre

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS—THURSDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY,
NOV. 11th, 12th and 13th.

High-Class Motion Pictures

Empire Orchestra

Alice Pinckston in Pictured Melody

TWO PERFORMANCES NIGHTLY 8 and 9.15. ADMISSION 10c.

Modern
Vaudeville

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH.

THE 4 DORDEENS—The greatest Costing Acrobats in Vaudeville
PHIL MILLS AND BESSIE MOULTON—In "A Trial Performance."
THREE MUSICAL MILLERS—In Song, Stories, and Music.
BIFF AND BANG—In Single Acrobatic Comedians
GAINES AND BROWN—Colored Comedians and Dancers
ALICE PINCKSTON—Rendering "The Road to Yesterday."
EMPIRESCOPE—Latest and best in Motion Photography
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Theo. Lewis—Popular Selections.

Modern
Vaudeville

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

Three Nights Starting Thursday, Nov. 18th

High Class Moving Pictures

Pictured Melody by Mr. Turner and
Empire Orchestra.

Admission 10c. Performances 8 and 9.15 p.m.

Modern
Vaudeville

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND.
ARTHUR HUSTON—In "The Great Escape" in Africa.
KERNAN WALTERS AND KERNAN—In "The Great Escape" sketch.
"The Royal Cook."
ORPHEUS COMEDY FOUR—Singing Comedians
CZINKA PANNA—In "The Great Escape" Novelty.
JACOB AND SARDEL—Acrobats, Jumping Comique
MISS WALL—Singing "Sweetest and Dearest."
EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Theo. Lewis—Youth and Riches
EMPIRESCOPE—Latest and best in Motion Photography.

EDMONTON'S
LEADING
THEATRE

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

Thursday, November 25th

THE MYSTERIOUS CORRESPONDENT

TWO UNLUCKY THIEVES

SPONGE FISHERIES

SPANISH BOY

DUEL UNDER RICHELIEU

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA

A Great Comedy

A Very Funny Film

Instructional Film

A Great Drama

A Most Interesting Offering

PICTURED MELLODY BY MISS WALL

ADMISSION 10c

ADMISSION 10c

EDMONTON'S
LEADING
THEATRE

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

JOHNSTON-KETCHELL FIGHT PICTURES

FRIDAY and SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26th and 27th, ONLY.

Wonderful reproduction of every incident and blow in the most exciting contest of modern times.

Life Size and Clear as Crystal

Showing the Champion knocked down, followed by the most sensational and dramatic knock out of Ketchell.

Also a special set of pictures showing Jeffries in training for his coming battle with Johnson.

Doors open 8 p.m. Performance 8:30 p.m. Saturday matinee 3 p.m.

GET YOUR SEATS EARLY.

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29th.

MISS MAY TULLY ... The Charming Canadian Actress, in

"Step, Look, Listen."

NOVELTY DANCE NO FOUR ... Most elaborate act of its kind in America

THE LAVAN TRIO ... Novel sensational Comedy Gymnasts

NANCY WATHO ... "Petite Pianologue"

DEL-A-PHONE ... Comedy Vocalist and Mimic

ALICE PINCKSTON ... Rendering, "An Old Sweetheart of Mine"

EMPIRESCOPE ... Latest and Best in Motion Photography

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA, Dir. Thos. Irving, ... Rendering "Titania"

SEE RAFFLES AT THE EMPIRE TONIGHT.

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY JANUARY 8th.

BLAKE'S MULE—The original Maud. The biggest laugh in vaudeville.

VIOLINSKI A genius on the violin—a wizard on the piano.

THE INTERNATIONAL SEPTETTE Colored singers and dancers.

SMALL, BLOAN AND SHERIDAN in "The Make Believe."

BOMERS AND OTTE European singers and comedians.

ALICE PINCKSTON, Rendering "It's the Pretty Things You Say."

EMPIRESCOPE Latest and best in animated photography.

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA Dir. Thos. Irving Popular Classics.

MATINEES ON MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY at 3 p.m.

MODERN
VAUDEVILLE

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING MONDAY, JANUARY 10th.

Mlle. LOUISE and her "Darwinian Demonstrations."

FRIEND AND DOWNING—In their original characters.

BARTLETT AND COLLINS—In their original comedy novelty act.

THE LOZARRO TRIO Singing and Instrumental Comedy.

FIELDING AND CARLOS Fancy roller skaters and novelty dancers.

ALICE PINCKSTON Rendering "Just Like the Rose."

EMPIRESCOPE Latest and best in animated photography.

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA Dir. Thos. Irving Popular Classics.

MATINEE ON MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY 3:00 p.m.

EDMONTON'S
LEADING
THEATRE.

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

THREE NIGHTS STARTING THURSDAY, JANUARY 13th.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH—Charles Dickens' masterpiece. A beautiful feature film.

THE NEW COP—A very interesting and decidedly attractive subject.

WHICH IS WHICH?—A film of real merit and a sure winner.

ALICE PINCKSTON—In "Painted Melody."

EMPIRE ORCHESTRA—Dir. Thos. Irving—Popular Classics.

Also Two More Screamingly Funny Comedy Picture Subjects.

CHILDREN'S MATINEE ON SATURDAY at 3 p.m. ADMISSION 10c.

Edmonton's
Leading
Theatre.

EMPIRE

PHONE
2185

Three Nights starting Monday, February 7th

**THE BIGGEST SHOW EVER
SEEN IN EDMONTON**

The SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CO.

MONDAY AND TUESDAY in "THEY LOVED A LASSIE."
WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY "THE STROLLERS."

In addition to the above the regular Empire Vaudeville bill including:
FIVE BORSINIS TROUPE..... Europe's Wonderful Globe Acrobats
POETTINGER'S SWEDISH QUINTETTE National Singers and Dancers
ROBERT HOO..... Novelty Comedy, offering "The Dollmaker"
L. ARTHUR..... Phenomenal German Equilibrist
THE COLLMANS..... Gold Medal Banjoists
ALICE PINCKSTON, rendering..... "Don't Worry"
EMPIRESCOPE. Latest Moving Pictures..... Empire Orchestra

PRICES for these three nights \$1.25, \$1.75c, 10c. Performance starts
at 8.00 sharp. Doors open 7.30.

Appendix "C"

Orpheum Circuit Vaudeville and Moving Picture Bills

at the Empire Theatre

September 16, 1912 to December 29, 1913

STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
3-DAYS-3
Commencing Monday Matinee,
September 18th.

JOSEPH J. LUTTERSON
In Jesse L. Lasky's Production
of
"IN 1939."
A Problem Play of the Future
by Cecil de Mille, with
FELICE MORRIS.

MAE MELVILLE AND ROBERT HIGGINS
"Just Married."
Albertina Rasch's
"LE BALLET CLASSIQUE"
With Domina Marini, Signor
Marcel Bronski and Company
of Ten.

THE GREAT ASHL
Supported by the Acrobatic Quintet
in Magic and Mystery.

BOWMAN BROTHERS,
The Blue Grass Boys.

THE THREE COLLEGIANS
Good Music and Good Fun.
BERG BROTHERS,
Freak Wheel Inventors.

EVENING, 8:30.
Prices, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.

MATINEE DAILY at 2:30.
Prices, 25c, 35c and 50c.
All Seats Reserved.

STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
3-DAYS-3
Commencing Monday Matinee,
September 18th.

JOSEPH J. LUTTERSON
In Jesse L. Lasky's Production
of
"IN 1939."
A Problem Play of the Future
by Cecil de Mille, with
FELICE MORRIS.

MAE MELVILLE AND ROBERT HIGGINS
"Just Married."
Albertina Rasch's
"LE BALLET CLASSIQUE"
With Domina Marini, Signor
Marcel Bronski and Company
of Ten.

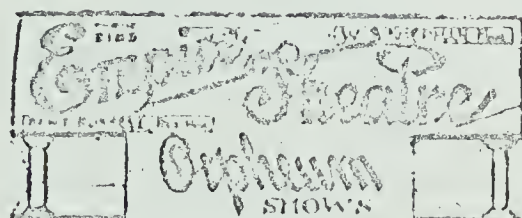
THE GREAT ASHL
Supported by the Acrobatic Quintet
in Magic and Mystery.

BOWMAN BROTHERS,
The Blue Grass Boys.

THE THREE COLLEGIANS
Good Music and Good Fun.
BERG BROTHERS,
Freak Wheel Inventors.

EVENING, 8:30.
Prices, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.

MATINEE DAILY at 2:30.
Prices, 25c, 35c and 50c.
All Seats Reserved.



The Standard of Vaudeville
3 DAYS commencing Mon-
day Matinee, SEPT. 23rd.

The Distinguished Actress.

MISS AMELIA BINGHAM

In her original idea, "Big Mo-
ments from Great Plays."

NELLIE NICHOLS

The Child Dainty Singer of Lit-
ing Songs.

SLIVERS

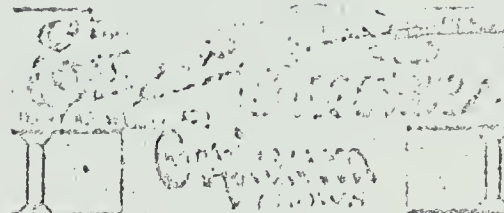
The Famous Clown

FRANK MORRELL

LEWIS & DODY

THE FLYING RUSSELLS

AZARD BROTHERS



The Standard of Vaudeville

3 DAYS commencing Mon-
day Matinee, SEPT. 30TH

First Visit of

HOWARD

The Scotch Original Sub-Vocalist

"MEIN LIEB GREN"

With Gus Weinburg

Written by George V. Hobart
Produced by Joseph Hart

BEATRIZ MICHELENA

Favorite Prima Donna in Oper-
atic and Popular Songs

Dance

CLAUDIUS and SCARLET

Presenting "The Call of the
Sixties"

CHARLIE OLCOTT

"A Comic Opera in Ten Minutes"

THE TWO ALFREDS

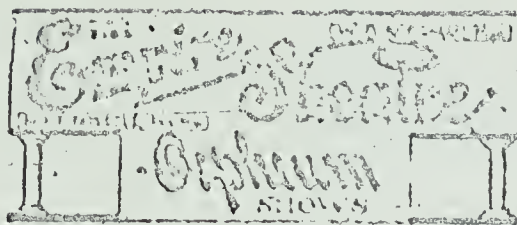
Head to Head Musicians

LES MARCO BELLI

French Comedy Conjurors

Matinee Daily, 2:30 p. m., 25c, 35c
and 50c. Evenings, 8:30, 25c,
30c, 35c and \$1.00.

All Seats Reserved one week in
Advance



The Standard of Vaudeville

3 DAYS COMMENCING MON- 3
DAY MATINEE, OCT. 7

LULU MCCONNELL AND
GRANT SIMPSON

In "The Right Girl"

NAT NAZARRO & CO.

The Acme of Athletic Artistry

GEORGE H. WATT

ROBERT WARD-LAWRENCE

FERGUSON & NORTHLANE

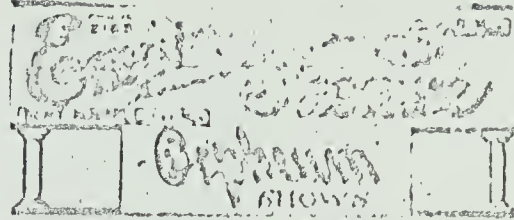
ARMSTRONG & CLARK

MEREDITH & "SNOOZER"

Matinee Daily 2:30 p. m., 25c, 35c,
and 50c.

Evenings, 8:30, 25c, 35c, 75c, \$1.00.

All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.



Standard of Vaudeville

Three Days, commencing Monday

Matinee, October 14th.

Jessie L. Lasky's

"CALIFORNIA"

With Leslie Leigh, Harry L. Griff-
ith and Austin Stuart.

JAMES J. MORTON

NONETTE

SCHICHTLE

ROYAL MARIONETTES

SIDNEY AYRES

In

"A CALL FOR THE WILD"

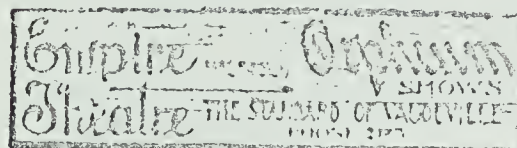
FRED AND ADELE ANSTAIR

ATKIN-WHITMAN TRIO

Matinee Daily 2:30 p. m., 25c, 35c, 50c

Evenings, 8:30, 25c, 35c, 75c, \$1.00.

All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.



3 Days Commencing Monday
Matinee, October 21, 1912.

Ethel Green

Vaudeville's Finest Comedienne

Toots Paka

And Her Hawaiian Singers and
Dancers

Gracie Emmett & Company

In "Mrs. Murphy's Second
Husband"

RAYNO'S BULLDOGS

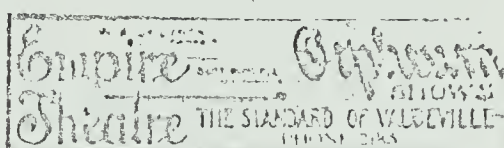
DAVID KIDD

EDWIN GEORGE

OMBRAS TRIO

Matinee Daily 2:30 p. m., 25c, 35c, 50c
Evenings, 8:30, 25c, 35c, 75c, \$1.00.

All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.



THREE DAYS commencing
Monday Matinee OCT. 29

MARION LITTLEFIELD'S
FLORENTINE SINGERS

CHARLES C. DREW & CO.

HERBERT'S

LOOP-THE-LOOP AND

LEAPING CANINES

GOLDSMITH AND HOPPE

ED. MORTON

THE FLYING MARTINS

Extra Headline Attraction

Ardienne Augarde

In "A Matter of Duty"

By Mrs. Richard Burton

Matinee Daily 2:30 p. m., 25c, 35c, 50c

Evenings, 8:30, 25c, 35c, 75c, \$1.00.

All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STAGGARD OF VALDEVILLE
PHONE 285

3 Days Commencing Nov. 4

LITTLE BILLY

Vaudeville's Finest Headliner

JERE GRADY and

FRANKIE CARPENTER

and their company in "The
Butterfly."

MIGNONETTE KOKIN

Original English Turkey

Hop Girl.

CAESAR RIVOLI

The Man of One Hundred
Revs.

A DAY AT THE CIRCUS

Presented by Galetti's
Monkeys.

Stella Maren

MAYE & ADDIS

Singers, Come Hennes and
Stunners.

LOCKHART & LEDDY

Comic Attempts at Self De-
struction.

Matinees, 25c, 25c, 50c.

Evenings and Holiday Mat-
inees, 25c, 50c, 75c, and \$1.00

All seats reserved One Week
in Advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STAGGARD OF VALDEVILLE
PHONE 285

Three Days Commencing
November 11.

PAUL DICKEY

AND COMPANY

in "The Come-Back"

T. Roy

Bessie

BARNES & CRAWFORD

HIGH-LIFE TRIO

OSCAR & SUZETTE

THE THREE BREMENS

LEW COOPER

DE WITT YOUNG

AND SISTER

Matinee Daily, 2.30 p.m.

25c, 35c, and 50c.

Evenings, 8.30., 25c, 35c, 50c.

75c and \$1.00.

All Seats Served One Week
in Advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
PHONE 2125

Three Days Commencing
NOVEMBER 18TH

BERT CLARK AND
MABEL HAMILTON

England's Musical Comedy
Stars in "A Wayward Concert"

SIGNOR TROTATO,
The Eccentric Violinist.

RENO AND GREEN,
"Hands Across the Street."

CARRIL REYNOLDS,
Fascinating Songbird and
Ballet Dancer.

THREE HASSANS,
Novelty Gimmicks.

HERBERT & GOLDSMITH,
Singing & Dancing Featuring
"The Dance of the Streets."

TUSCANO BROTHERS,
Battle-Axe Jugglers.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
PHONE 2125

THREE DAYS COMMENCING NOVEMBER 28.

GALLOWAY & KAUFMAN CO., in "Little Mother."

MR. & MRS. JIMMIE BARRY, presenting "The Robe."

CHRIS. RICHARDS, the Eccentric English Chap.

O'BRIEN-HAYEL & CO., in "Monday."

THE SCHMETTANS, Classic Posers and Equilibrists.

RUBY RAYMOND & BOBBIE HEATH

"In the Good Old Summer Time."

FRANK and TRUMAN RICE, Talkative Tumblers.

Matinee Daily, 2.30 p.m., 25c, 35c and 50c.

Evenings, 8.30, 25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00

All Seats Reserved One Week in Advance.

Empire Theatre **Empire Theatre**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
PERFORMERS

Monday Matinee, Dec. 2

CRESSY & DAYNE

In Mr. Cressy's Greatest
Play, "The Village Lawyer"
Lolo-Merrill & Otto-Frank
"After the Shower."

The Harvey Family

Including - Europe's Most
Famous Lady Aerialists.

Hopkins & Atell

In a Twinkling Travesty,
"Travelling"

Marion & Jessie Standish
Sweet Singing Comediennees.

Warren & Blanchard

Comedian and Singer.

NIP & TUCK

A 1 Act with Plenty of Action

Matinee Daily, 2:30 p. m., 25c,
35c and 50c. Evenings, 8:30,
25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00.

All Seats Reserved One Week
in Advance.

Empire Theatre **Empire Theatre**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
PERFORMERS

Three Days Commencing Monday

Matinee, December 16, 1912.

TODAY at 2:30. TONIGHT at 8:30

And at the same hours every day.

Ralph Herz

Late Comedian with "Madame Sherry?"

"Dr. De Luxe" and "The
Charity Girl."

THOSE FRENCH GIRLS

SEELEY AND WEST

HENRY LEWIS

GORDON & MCKINLEY

M'LE LUCILLE

Minnie Dupree

And Her Company in Alfred Sutro's
One-Act Play, "The Man
In Front."

MATINEE DAILY, 2:30: 25c, 35c, 50c.
EVENING, 8:30: 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00

All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALLEEVILLE

DAYS COM. MONDAY, MATINEE, Dec. 23rd.

MRS. LANGTRY

(Lady de Bathe) in
"THE TEST"

Adapted by Graham Hill from
Sardou's Play,
"A WIFE'S PERIL"

The Sioux Indian Mystic
LOLO

In a Scintillating Exhibition of Mental Suggestion

GEORGE W.—BARRY & WOLFORD—MAUDE.

At the Song Booth"

ROXY LA ROCCA

Royalty's Favorite

WORK AND PLAY

American Acrobatic Comedysts

GORDON BROTHERS

Singing and Dancing

LEWIS STONE

The Original Topsy Turvy Dancer

MATINEE DAILY, 2:30, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00
EVENING, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00.
All seats Reserved One Week in Advance

Empire Theatre
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALLEEVILLE

3 Days, Commencing Monday,
December 30, 1912.

AMELIA STONE

ARMAND KALIEZ

THE MAN FROM THE WEST

THE HESS SISTERS

THE MAN FROM THE WEST

JAMES H. CULLEN

THE MAN FROM THE WEST

John—Hennings—Winnie

THE KID-KARE KID

THE SISTERS GASCH

World's Famous Lady Gymnasts

ETHEL MAE BARKER

THE JUVENILE VIRTUOSO

THE DARING DARTS

Original Act of Novelty

MATINEE DAILY, 2:30, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00
EVENING, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00.
All seats Reserved One Week in Advance

Empire Theatre
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALLEEVILLE

3 Days, Commencing Monday,
December 30, 1912.

AMELIA STONE

ARMAND KALIEZ

THE MAN FROM THE WEST

THE HESS SISTERS

THE MAN FROM THE WEST

JAMES H. CULLEN

THE MAN FROM THE WEST

John—Hennings—Winnie

THE KID-KARE KID

THE SISTERS GASCH

World's Famous Lady Gymnasts

ETHEL MAE BARKER

THE JUVENILE VIRTUOSO

THE DARING DARTS

Original Act of Novelty

MATINEE DAILY, 2:30, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00
EVENING, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00.
All seats Reserved One Week in Advance

Emilia - Emilia.
Columbus

3. J. VAN S—Contributions: Tuesday, March 19, January 14th, 1943.

A REAL THERMAL ATTRACTION—
H. A. ROLL'S EXTRAVAGANZA

"PUSS IN BOOTS"

AN LITERARY LECTURE, DELIVERED BY H. B. H.
2d, AUGUST 10, 1865, BY JOHN KENNEDY,
LAWYER, AT THE W. J. McKENNA,
MUSIC, BY R. A. HOFF.

A Company of 25 People Featuring
WILL J. KENNEDY.

Mr. & Mrs. Jack McGroovy
The Village Fiddler and the
Country Maid."

APDALE'S ZOO CIRCUS
The Acme of Animal Comedy.
IGNATIUS CARDOSH

CLARA BALLERINI
LEONARD SANCHEZ ARRIETA

MILLER & LYLE
In a full and bright Comedy.

Matinee Daily, 2.50—25c, 35c and 50c.
Evenings, 8.00—25c, 30c, 35c and 50c.
All Seats Reserved. Our Work for
Admission.

[Handwritten signature]

Three Days Commencing
January 20th, 1913.

VOLANT, Assisted by LILY DE ROY,
18 5 2

"The Flying Piano"

James
DIAMOND & BRENNAN
In a Merry Mixture entitled,
"Niggerhouse."

Edwards, Ryan & Tierney
These Pleasing Entertainers

THE BESSON PLAYERS
In "Between the Trains."

Five Juggling Mowatts
In Acts of Marvellous Ability

MCCORMACK & IRVING

THE DARING DORLANDS
Doing New and Clever Stunts.

Matinee Daily, 2:30: 25c, 50c and 75c
Evenings, 8:30: 25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00
All Seats Reserved One Week in Advance.

Empire
 Shows

Three Days Commencing
Monday, Jan. 27th

RUBE MARQUARD

The Glens' Great Northpaw,
With the Late Star of
The Charity Girl.

BLOSSOM SEELEY
 In "The 10 Minute, or Break,
 for the World's Record."

Lida McMillan & Company
10 "The Gate" Mr. Allen."

EDDIE HOWARD
(Late of Howard and North)
In whose Memory the Happy Days

CHAS. B. LAWLOR
AND DAUGHTERS

WOTFEET & PAULAN

STEINER TRIO :
Comedy Bar Performers

HAL & FRANCES
In the song "The Black
Form"

Matinee Daily, 1:30: 15c, 25c and 50c
Evenings, 8:30: 15c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00
All Seats Reserved One Week In Advance.

Empire Theatre THE STANDARD OF VALENTINOS

Three Days Starting Monday,
February 3rd

Forewell Appearance Together of
WILLIAM BUCK and
MAUDE FULTON

Exponents of the Higher Develop-
ments of Dapeng, Pantomime and
Burlesque, in

Spectacular Songs and Dances.
 The Famous Jovial Jugglers
BEDINI & ARTHUR

Assisted by Eddie Couter
CLAUDE GOLDEN
 Australia's Latest Importation

GUERRO & CARMEN
A European Duo of Harp and

The Famous California Vegetable
Catalpa

Assisted by HILDBRED EMMETT,
Presenting a Novel Musical and
Theatrical Entertainment.

THE JORDAN GIRLS
A Comely Trio of Wise Artists.

3 MELVIN BROTHERS
 Ecclesiastical Gymnasts.
 Matinee Daily; 2:30; 25c, 35c and 65c.
 Evenings, 8:30; 25c, 35c, 50c and \$1.00.
 All Seats Reserved One Week In

Empire Theatre **Optimism**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALLEYVILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday, Feb'y. 10, 1913

Joseph Hart Presents
DIGBY BELL & COMPANY
In a One-Act Farce entitled

**"It Happened
In Topeka"**

By George V. Hobart.
The Girl from Milwaukee
A Remarkable Vocalist.
WILL DILLON

The Popular Song Writer.
First Visit to Canada

PEGGIE LENNIE & CO.
In an Egyptian Musical Travesty.
"CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE"

THE KYLES
The Juvenile and the French
Maid

DEL-A-PHONE
Man, Woman or Machine?
GRAVETTA & LA VONDRE
European Transformists.

Matinee Daily, \$1.50, 25c, 50c and 50c.
Evenings, 8:30: 25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00.
All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre **Optimism**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALLEYVILLE

5 Days, Commencing Mon-
day, Feb. 17th, 1913.

SAM MANN

And His Players in "The New
Flooder" by Anton Hoffman

THE FOUR HUNTINGS

Including Harry S. Fern, in a new
Comedy by Frank North, "The
Tennier Trained"

**DAVID SCHOOLER &
LOUISE DICKINSON**

Boy-Badrowick and the Juvenile
Mary Gaudin

HERBERT CYRIL

"The English Comedy Singer"

THE FRED BROTHERS

In "Cutting the Kismet's Water"

MADAME LA TOSCA & CO.

A Trio of Artistic Vocalists and
Instrumentalists

THE GREAT TORNADOS

A Battalion of Aerial Tacticians and
Athletes

Matinee Daily, 2:30: 25c, 50c, 75c, 50c.
Evenings, 8:30: 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00.
All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre **Optimism**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALLEYVILLE

Three Days commencing Mon-
day Matinee, Feb. 24, 1913.

JOSEPH HART

"An Opening Night"

By George V. Hobart,
Company of 25. Special scenery.

CHARLES FALKE SEMON

"The Barrow Fellow"

BIG CITY FOUR

Trayer—Halse—Linnson—Reed

RICHARDS & KYLE

In "A Regular Fish Fellow"

DOLORES VALLECITA

Leopolda,
and her troupe of Trained Indian

LAWRENCE JOHNSTON

Ventiloquist.

SIDNEY BAXTER

"The Wily Scot"
Assisted by Beatrice Southwick.

Matinee Daily, 2:30: 25c, 50c, 75c, 50c.
Evenings, 8:30: 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00.
All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre **Optimism**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALLEYVILLE

Three Days commencing Mon-
day Matinee, Mar. 3, 1913.

Homer B. —Margarite

Mason & Keeler

and their company in "THE AND OUT"

SANDOR S. BURLESQUE

CIRCUS

A European Novelty

BIXLEY & LERNER

The Musical Comedy of Yesterday

THE MUSIKAL OTTOS

An attractive group of vocal artists

FRED M. GRIFFITH

The "Honey-Moon" artist

DAN THE LA-CRANDALL

"The Girl on the Wire"

Extra Headline Attraction

DAISY JEROME

"The Electric Spark"

Matinee Daily, 2:30: 25c, 50c, 75c, 50c.
Evenings, 8:30: 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00.
All Seats Reserved One Week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre **Epiphany**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDEVILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday Matinee, March 10
The Season's Tenth Anniversary

**"More Sinned Against
Than Usual"**

"A Traversy Drama"
By Everett Ruess

PERCY WARREN & CO.

In "The House of the Dead"
By W.W. Jacobs and H.N. Abner

THREE BOHEMIANS

Stays, Whiskers and Slippers

HARRY BREEN

The Hap-Hop-Hop Writer

**WM. ABBOTT and
JULIA CURTIS**

In Love and Indignation

ROLANDOW BROS.

Expert Hand Balancers

Charles Kellogg

The Nature Finder

Matinee: Daily, 2:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
Evenings: 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Epiphany**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDEVILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday Matinee, March 17

MISS BELL BAKER,

The International Popcorn Cook for
Slack

HARRY LEIGHTON & CO.

In "Get Away Quick, Darling!" by
Harry Leighton

Mockery & Deceit

**"THE WINDOW OF OPPORTU-
NITY"**

WOOD AND WYDE

Myriad of Rhythms and Rhythms

"DOC" O'NEIL

The Merry Man

ISHIKAWA BROS.

Japanese Equitists

LORETTE AND RALPH

Visions in the Dark

Matinee: Daily, 2:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
Evenings: 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Epiphany**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDEVILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday Matinee, March 24

Henry E. Dixey

In his "Mysticisms and Visions"

HALE NORCROSS & CO.

OLD SOLDIER FIDDLERS

HARRY B. LESTER

BARRY & MORTIMER

SPENCER & WILLIAMS

POWER BROTHERS

Opening Next Week

JULIUS STEGER

Matinee: Daily, 2:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
Evenings: 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Epiphany**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDEVILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday Matinee, March 31

Julius Steger

And His Company in

"JUSTICE"

Directed by Max Reinhardt

LYDIA HAREY

TESCHOW &

ENTERTAINERS

ARNAUT BROTHERS

BALL & WHEAT

KEANE & WHITE

DE RENZO & LA DUE

Matinee: Daily, 2:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
Evenings: 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
THE STANDARD OF VALLEUILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday Matinee, April 7th
Matinee Daily at 2.00. Performances
at 8.30.

**THE TOP O' TH'
WORLD DANCERS**

With the Originals in the Field, in
"Kiss, Rhythm, and Love"

EDGAR ARCHERSON & CO.
In "Only a Foolish Boy" the most
entertaining with the most beautiful

EDDY, THE TALKING DOG
Cyril's Wonder of the Century
shown by J. J. H. H. H.

LESTER
The Great Actor

CURZON SISTERS
The Great Dancers

ELIZABETH OTTO
The Great Singer

THE ROMANOV
Living Royal Family

Matinee Performances at 2.00 and 8.30
Evening Performances at 8.30 and 11.00
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
THE STANDARD OF VALLEUILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday Matinee, April 14
Matinee Daily at 2.00. Performances
at 8.30.

JESSIE BUSLEY

The Most Beautiful and Most Beautiful

LADDIE CLIFF

The Most Beautiful and Most Beautiful

MARGARET ASHTON

**FIVE MELODY MAIDS
AND A MAN**

MEEHAN'S CANINES

**CHARLES AND ADELAIDE
WILSON**

DELMAR AND DELMAR

Matinee Performances at 2.00 and 8.30
Evening Performances at 8.30 and 11.00
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
THE STANDARD OF VALLEUILLE

Three Days Commencing
Monday Matinee, April 21
Matinee Daily at 2.00. Performances
at 8.30.

GUS EDWARDS

THE HEAVENLY CREATION
With the Originals in the Field, in
"Kiss, Rhythm, and Love"

DAVE KRABER & GEORGE
MORTON

WM. H. LYELL & CO.

EDDIE LINN

GENERAL PISANO

LES ALVAREZ

Matinee Performances at 2.00 and 8.30
Evening Performances at 8.30 and 11.00
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
THE STANDARD OF VALLEUILLE

THREE DAYS COMMENCING MON-
DAY MATINEE, APRIL 28TH, 1914
THOMAS A. EDISON'S
Latest and Greatest Invention

**Talking and
Moving Pictures**

MME. OLGA PETROVA
In "Comedy and Tragedy"
MR. DANIEL FLORENS

"DETECTIVE KLEN"
A Detective Story in Three Parts
With Arthur Hill

BOBERT AND NELSON
In "The Greatest Day of His Life"

FLAVIA
In "The Great Actor"

WOODS AND WOODS TRIO
In "An Original Comedy Performance"
An Original Comedy Performance

THE CROMWELLS
A Wonderful and Interesting Story
of the Cromwells

SAM RICHARD & COMPANY
In "A Unique and Wonderful Performance"

Matinee Performances at 2.00, 8.30 and 11.00
Evening Performances at 8.30, 11.00 and 11.30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

3 Days Commencing Monday
Matinee, May 5th, 1913

Mr. Andrew Mack

Presenting a Melody Monologue
"THE SHIP'S CONCERT"

BOB MATTHEWS & AL CHAYNE
In a Tabled Fantasy,
"A NIGHT ON THE BOWERY"

JOE WILLARD & CAIN—John
In "DETECTIVISM"

IRENE BERGSEY
Climax Melodrama

HARRY DE COE
The Man with the Tally and Chalk

"THE GIRL FROM CHICAGO"
In Songs

FIVE HURRIES
Speed Boys and Girls

EDISON'S TALKING
MOVING PICTURES
The Wonder of the Century

Matinee: 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 7:30, and 9:00
Evening: 8:00, 9:30, 11:00, and 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

3 Days Commencing Monday
Matinee, May 12, 1913

Louis A. Simon and
Osterman Kathryn

Assisted by a company of 11 in a
Musical Comedy
"A PERSIAN GARDEN"

Frederick—Bond & Binston—Erment
JOE JACKSON

Erment—Burnham & Irwin—Charles
LOUIS LONDON

MONTAGUE & WELLS

ORCHESTRA

TALKING MOVING PICTURES
The Wonder of the Century
With new subjects

Matinee: 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 7:30, and 9:00
Evening: 8:00, 9:30, 11:00, and 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

3 Days Commencing Monday
Matinee, May 19, 1913

Miss Zelda Sears

And Her Company, in "THE WARD"
ROBERT WOODMAN, Actor and Director
"The Ward" is a story of life in a hospital
written by the author
Wood

BRONSON & BALLATIN

Frank—Combs & Aldwell—Erment

MELICUS ISLAND
JESSIE MILYARD

MRS. & MRS. GORDON WHITE

THE FOUR ROLLERS

JOHNNY JOHNSTONE

Thomas A. Edison's

TALKING MOVING PICTURES
The Wonder of the Century

Matinee: 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 7:30, and 9:00
Evening: 8:00, 9:30, 11:00, and 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

3 Days Commencing Monday
Matinee, May 26, 1913

The Original Lancers

Eight Palace Girls

Direct from the Palace Theatre, London, England, where they were
the Principal Attraction
for Five Years

Miss—Norton & Nicholson—Paul
In a Dramatic Cartoon by Miss Norton

MUSICAL GERMANS
Featuring Katherine German, the
Irish Cornetist

MIRIE BERKIN
The Girl From Rome
G. S. MELVIN

The Versatile Scott
CHIEF CAPOLOGIA

Wonderful Acrobatic Indian Baritone
Singer

THE GOYT TRIO
Novelty Comedians featuring "Patsy"
The Wonderful Songstress of the
THOMAS A. EDISON'S

TALKING MOVING PICTURES
The Wonder of the Century

Matinee: 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 7:30, and 9:00
Evening: 8:00, 9:30, 11:00, and 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum** THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

Three Days, Commencing Monday
Matinee, June 2nd, 1913

Willard MACK and Marjorie RAMBEAU In Willard Mack's "Kick-In."	Gladys CLARK and Henry BERGMAN In Jesse L. Lasky's "The Trained Nurses."
---	--

PROFESSOR OTY GYGI
Court Violinist to King of Spain
WALTER DE LEON & DAVIES
"MUGGINS"
In Song Hits from "The Campers"

TILLIE GROHS
A European Novelty

LEW JOSEMAN
The Hat Mania

CECILE BRUNSTAD
The English Comedienne
Thomas A. Edison's

Talking Moving Pictures
With New Subjects

MATINEE DAILY 2:00-4:00, 25c, 50c, 75c
EVENING, 8:00-10:00, 50c, 75c and \$1.00
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum** THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days, Commencing Monday
June 10th, 1913

PAT ROONEY
and
MARION BENT

In "The New Road"
LAMBERT
The Master Musician

MR. HARRIS, RITA BOLAND
AND **LEW HOLTZ**
The In-Laws

MISS IDA ODAY
In Her Original Songbook

THOMAS P. JACKSON & CO.
In "The Letter From Home"

CARL AND LOTIS
Recent Pictures

Thomas A. Edison's
Latest, Greatest and Most
Wonderful Invention

Talking Moving Pictures

MATINEE DAILY 2:00-4:00, 25c, 50c,
EVENING, 8:00-10:00, 50c, 75c and \$1.00
All seats reserved one week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum** THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days, Commencing Monday
June 9th, 1913

The American Comedienne
MISS IRENE FRANKLIN
With Mr. Paul Green at the Piano
and Noted Composer
and Bob Foster
THEODORE BLANDY
And His Symphonic Players
Michael Rosenfeld, Jacques Stange
and Arthur Bernstein
ERLE WATSON and
IRENE SAYLOR

Urberville Ideas - "The Gipsy" and
"The Gipsy"

HAL DAVIS, IRENE
MAGALEY & CO.

Presenting "The Gipsy Club"
An original comedy sketch
"The Gipsy Club"

MORAN & WISER
Comedy Sketches "The Gipsy Club"

MCINERNEY & HARRIS
The "Gipsy Club" and the
"The Gipsy Club"

CARSON BROTHERS
Selling the "Gipsy Club" and the
"The Gipsy Club"

Thomas A. Edison's
Latest, Greatest and Most
Wonderful Invention

Talking Moving Pictures

MATINEE DAILY 2:00-4:00, 25c, 50c,
EVENING, 8:00-10:00, 50c, 75c and \$1.00
All seats reserved one week in
Advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum** THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

Three Days, Commencing Monday
June 10th, 1913

KID HEBERT

With **EDDIE CANOE** and
GEORGE JENSEN

WILL ROGERS

MISS JANE CONNELLY & CO.

ROSE VALERIO SEXTETTE

HELEN TRIX

BRENT HAYES

LA VALERA AND MELVIN STOKES

THOMAS A. EDISON'S

TALKING MOVING PICTURES

WITH NEW SUBJECTS

MATINEE DAILY 2:00-4:00, 25c and 50c,
EVENING, 8:00-10:00, 50c, 75c and \$1.00
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STADIUM OF VALLEYVILLE

3 Days Commencing Monday Mat.
June 30th, 1913.

**TAYLOR
HOLMES**

Like Star of "The Million"

**BELL
FAMILY**

Same Musical In 1912 and 1913

ANGELA KIRK & COMPANY

SWAN—JESMAN TRIO

HAMILL & ABBYIE

DEVINE & WILLIAMS

EDGAR BERGER

THOMAS A. EDISON'S

Latest and Greatest Invention

TALKING MOVING PICTURES

Matinee Daily 2:00—25c, 50c and 75c.
Evening 8:00—25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00.

All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STADIUM OF VALLEYVILLE

3 Days Commencing Monday Mat.
July 7th, 1913.

Milton Fellock & Co.

SPEAKING TO PATRONS

THE GREAT NAMES

PHINA & CO.

WALTER S. RUBY DICK-
INSON

BILLYE BRADON

ARMSTRONG

WATKINS BENTLEY

THOMAS A. EDISON'S

TALKING MOVING PICTURES

Matinee Daily 2:00—25c, 50c and 75c.
Evening 8:00—25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00.

All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STADIUM OF VALLEYVILLE

3 days commencing on Matinee July
14th, 1913.

W. Edwards Davis

In His Absence in Phoenix and Miami

**"THE KINGDOM OF
DESTINY"**

THE VANIAS

WILLIAMS, THOMPSON &
COVELAND

THREE DU-FOR BOYS

ROBINS

FIDDLER & SHELTON

THE CROMWELLS

THOMAS A. EDISON'S

Latest, Greatest and Most Wonderful
Invention

TALKING MOVING PICTURES

With New and Interesting Subjects

Matinee Daily 2:00—25c, 50c and 75c.
Evening 8:00—25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00.

All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STADIUM OF VALLEYVILLE

3 Days Commencing Matinee July
21, 1913

The Cheerful Comedienne

Stella Mayhew and) Headliner
Billie Taylor)

The Distinguished

ed Actor

W. L. Abingdon

And His Own

Company in

"Honor Is Satis-

fied," by

Charles Fiddy

The Celebrated

Dramatic Per-

former

Alma Youlin

In a Repertoire

of Songs

E. BERT KENNEY—I. R.
NOBODY—E. BOOTH PLATT

Originator of Nobody, Champion Sing-
ing Comedians

BARTHOLDI'S BIRDS

Fifty Comedy Paperkeys, Cuckoos,
and Parrots

WARD BAKER

America's Most Beautiful Artist

EDDIE MACK AND DOT
WILLIAMS

Amuseville Novelty Dancers

THOMAS A. EDISON'S

Latest, Greatest and Most Wonderful
Invention

TALKING MOVING PICTURES

With New and Interesting Subjects

Matinee Daily 2:00—25c, 50c and 75c.
Evening 8:00—25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00.

All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

THE STAGE OF VINCENNE

3 Days Commencing Matinee July 28, 1918

Miss Blanche Walsh

And her company in "The Countess Nadine" by Joseph Golden

Ed. FLANNAGAN AND EDWARDS
In "Out and On"

BEDFORD AND WINCHESTER
Who Have Juggled Around the World

CHARLOTTE RAVENSCROFT
The Singing Violinist

WINSTON AND DUFFY
The Matinee Girl and the Professor

THE TERS TRIO
Musical Vagabonds

GENE MULLER TRIO
Aeroplane Hoopsters

WORLD'S NEWS VIEWS
Interesting Events in Pictures

Matinee Daily 2:30, 5:00 and 7:00
Evenings 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 and 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

THE STAGE OF VINCENNE

Three days commencing August 4

The World's Greatest Woman Comedy

ELSA RUEGGE

Assisted by Edmund Blunden

JACK HUNTER & COMPANY
In "A Business Proposal" by Daniel
and Carter

MANNING, MOORE AND ARM-
STRONG
A Tale of Racing, Lida

KIRK AND LOGARLY
Father and Son

BUCKLEY'S ANIMALS
Introducing "Teddy"

LIS YOST
Windward Sculpture

Extra Added Headline Attraction

THE OLYMPIA GIRLS
Folk of London in Novel and Artistic
Dancing

World's News Views
Interesting events in pictures

Matinee Daily 2:30, 5:00 and 7:00
Evenings 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 and 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

THE STAGE OF VINCENNE

3 Days commencing Monday Mat. Aug. 21

BIG EXHIBITION BILL

Directed by Larry Ryskind

The Little Pa Isienne

With Victor Serrano

HOBY AND LEE

WALLIS CLARK

DELMORE AND LIGHT

THE OCEAN WELAND

ETHEL McDONOUGH

THE JOCKLING MILLERS

News Views Orchestra

Matinee Daily 2:30, 5:00 and 7:00
Evenings 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 and 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

THE STAGE OF VINCENNE

3 Days commencing Monday Mat. Aug. 21

"The New Song Birds"

William Burress

And company of 22

J. B. NUGENT

MULLEN & COOGAN

CARL McCULLOUGH

LANE & O'DONNELL

HANDERS & MILLER

CARL ROSINE & CO.

News Views Orchestra

Matinee Daily 2:30, 5:00, 7:00 & 9:00
Evenings 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 & 11:30
All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDESVILLE

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee, Aug.
25, 1913

WILLIAM J. DOOLEY

And a Company of
Versatile Juvveniles In

"THE LAWN PARTY"

**FRANK MILTON AND
DE LONG SISTERS**

EMILY DARRELL & CONWAY

FROZINI

JOHN McALLEN & CARSON

JEANETTE FRANZESKA & JOHN M. SCHOUTEN

**MILLIE MARTHA
AND HER SISTERS**

NEWS VIEWS ORCHESTRA

Matinee daily, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30 and 5:00.
Evening, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30 and 10:00.
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDESVILLE

3 Days Commencing Monday Mat-
inee, September 1st, 1913.

Charlotte
PARRY
In
"Into the Light"

Maude
Lambert
and
Ernest Hall

LORRAINE & BURKS

MISS ROBBIE GORDONE

BELLECLAIRE & HERMAN

THE JUNGMAHN FAMILY

News Views Orchestra

Added Attraction
**ED WYNN AND
COMPANY**

With Frank Wunderlee In
"The King's Jester"

Matinee daily, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30 and 5:00.
Evening, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30 and 10:00.
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDESVILLE

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee
Sept. 8th, 1913

LULU GLASER

Assisted by Tom Richards in
the Operette

"FIRST LOVE"

SWOR & MACK

THE LANGDONS

GEORGETTE

**KLUTING'S ENTER-
TAINERS**

**SUTTON, MCINTYRE &
SUTTON**

SIDNEY & TOWNLEY

News Views Orchestra

Matinee daily, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30 and 5:00.
Evening, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30 and 10:00.
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VALDESVILLE

3 Days Commencing Monday Mat-
inee, September 1st, 1913.

DANCE DREAM

THE WOMAN WHO

THE WOMAN WHO

THE WOMAN WHO

THE WOMAN WHO

THE WOMAN WHO

THE WOMAN WHO

THE WOMAN WHO

Empire Theatre

3 Days Commencing Monday
 Monday Sept 23rd, 1913

SAM CHIP and MARY MARBLE

In "The Lord of Dymally"

AGNES SCOTT & HENRY
 KEANE

CONLIN, STEELE & CARR

FRALSON & GOLDIE

ANDREW P. KELLY

ANKER BROTHERS

LAVIER and MISS SHEROOD

News Views and Orchestra

Matinee daily 2:30, 3:30, 5:30 and 8:30
 Evening 8:30, 9:30, 10:30 and 11:30
 All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

3 Days Com. Monday, Oct 1st
 Matinee Daily 2:30. Nights at 8:30

S. MILLER KENT

And His Company in the
 "Killer" of Vaudeville

"The Real Q"

JOE WELCH

THE THREE COLLEGIANS

THE THREE COLLEGIANS

WARREN & CONLEY

ARCO BROTHERS

RALPH SMALLEY

MILIE. TINA

News Views and Orchestra

Matinee daily 2:30, 3:30, 5:30 and 8:30
 Evening 8:30, 9:30, 10:30 and 11:30
 All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre

3 Days Com. Monday, Sept.
 29th, 1913

Matinee Daily 2:30. Nights at
 8:30

MISS KATHRYN KIDDER

In her creation, the Character
 of Mme. Sans Gene, in
 "THE WASHERWOMAN
 DUCHESS"

JAMES J. MORTON

CHUNG HWA COMEDY
 FOUR

THE THREE ELLISONS

RICE, SULLEY & SCOTT

DELLA ROSA & MARCELLO

LOWE & DE MARLE

Matinee daily 2:30, 3:30, 5:30 and 8:30
 Evening 8:30, 9:30, 10:30 and 11:30
 All seats reserved one week in advance

Empire Theatre **Opium**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee
Oct. 13th, 1913.
Matinee Daily at 2.15. Nights
at 8.15

HARRY FOX and
YANGSI BOLLY

Smart Fooling, Songs and
Patter

GENARO & BAILEY

GEORGE HOLLAND & CO.

ARMSTRONG & CLARK

BLANK FAMILY

MISS VIRGINIA BANKIN

KITARO FOUR

World's. Operatic
News Views Concert

Matinee dolls 2.50, 2.00, 1.50 and 1.00.
Evening, 8.00, 7.50, 6.00, 4.50 and 3.00
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Opium**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee
Oct. 13th, 1913
Matinee Daily at 2.15. Nights
at 8.15

The World-Famous Dancer

Mlle. DAZIE

In the Partonime, "Pantomime"

by SIR JAMES MATTHEW
BARRIE.

SIX MUSICAL CUTTYS

STUART BARNES

MAUDE O'DELLE & CO.

**MABELLE LEWIS & PAUL
McARTHY**

WHITEFIELD & IRELAND

FRED & ALBERT

NEWS VIEWS ORCHESTRA

Matinee dolls 2.50, 2.00, 1.50 and 1.00.
Evening 8.00, 7.50, 6.00, 4.50 and 3.00
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Expression**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee,
October 27th
Matinee Daily, 2:30—Evening, 8:30

Marie McFarland

The American Melba, and

MADAME "Y"

An Operatic Star of International
Fame

**BILLY GOULD & BELLE
ASHLYN**

JOHN E. HAZZARD

AUSTIN WEBB & COMPANY

DUPREE AND DUPREE

TWO CARLTONS

HYMAN MEYER

NEWS VIEWS ORCHESTRA

Matinee daily 2:30, 5:00, 6:30 and 8:00.
Evening, 8:25, 1:00, 5:00, 7:30 and 10:00
All seats reserved one week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Expression**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee Nov.
3, 1913

Matinee Daily 2:30. Nights at
8:30

**Taylor Granville &
Laura Pierpont**

In "THE SYSTEM"

By Taylor Granville, in collabora-
tion with McCreck and Clark

LYONS AND YOBBO

Clayton—KENNEDY &

ROONEY—Matine

**MR. MARSHALL MONT.
GOMERY**

EDNA MUNSEY

"BEAUX ARTS"

LA TOY BROTHERS

ORCHESTRA

Matinee daily, 2:30, 5:00, 6:30 and
8:00. Evening, 8:30, 1:00, 5:00, 7:30
and 10:00. All seats reserved one
week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
 THE STAGE OF VALLEYVILLE

3 Days Com, Monday Matinee Nov.
 10, 1913

Matinee Daily 2.30. Night at
 8.30

John F. Conroy

The World's Greatest Life-Saver. An-
 nounced by His
 MODELS AND DIVING GIGS

ED. CALLAGHER
 and **BOB CARLIN**

BERT LEVY

NONETTE

LLOYD AND WHITEHOUSE

MURIEL AND FRANCES

BOLLINGER & REYNOLDS

ORCHESTRA

Matinee daily, 2.30, 2.50, 3.50 and

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
 THE STAGE OF VALLEYVILLE

The Beaumont Sisters
 Nov. 11th, 1913

THE BEAUMONT SISTERS

BILLY B. VAN

and COMPANY in

"PROPS"

SOPHIE BARNARD

LOU ANGLE

THE SIX BAZARINE

LORNA & TIGIS POUNDS

CORELLI & GILLETTE

HANLON & HANLON

ORCHESTRA

Matinee, 2.30, 2.50, 3.50 and
 4.50. Night, 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30
 and 11.00. Special event 10.00
 work in 10.00.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF AMUSEMENT

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee
Nov. 24th, 1913

Matinee Daily 2:30. Nights
at 8:30

Catherine Courtiss

And Her Company in

'The Birthday Present'

MISS LILIAN HERLEIN

LEW HAWKINS

THE FIVE SULLYS

THREE DOLOE SISTERS

THE BRADS

LENNETT & WILSON

ORCHESTRA

Matinee daily, 2:30, 25c, 35c and
50c. Evening, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c
and \$1.00. All seats reserved one
week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Orpheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF AMUSEMENT

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee
Dec. 1st, 1913

Matinee Daily 2:30. Nights at
8:30

The Royal Illusionist

HORACE GOLDIN

Presenting

**"THE OLD AND THE NEW,
AND THE TIGER GOD,
TOO"**

Maude Ed.

MULLER & STANLEY

MR. AND FREDERICK
ALLEN

BOUDINI BROTHERS

SCHRINER & RICHARDS

TRYON'S DOGS

ORCHESTRA

Matinee daily, 2:30, 25c, 35c and
50c. Evening, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c
and \$1.00. All seats reserved one
week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Epheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days Com. Monday Matinee
December 8th, 1913
Matinee Daily 2:30. Nights at
8:30

Nina Morris

and company in

"The Yellow Peril"

BERT FITZGIBBONS

MARTIN E. JOHNSON'S
TRAVELOGUES

WILSON & PEARSON

DAISY LEON

ROBERTO Assisted by BEA
VERERA

MARLO & DUFFY

ORCHESTRA

Matinee daily, 2:30, 25c, 35c and
50c. Evening, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c
and \$1.00. All seats reserved one
week in advance.

Empire Theatre **Epheum**
SHOWS
THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE.
PHONE 2185

3 Days Commencing Monday Matinee December 15th, 1913
Matinee Daily 2:30 Nights at 8:30

The Famous Actor

Frank Keenan

and Company in
"VINDICATION"

Famous Bushman and Stock-
Whip Expert

Mr. Fred Lindsay

Entire English Company

ALBERT VON TILZER & CO.

EDNA SHOWALTER

SHARP & TURK

MARGARET ISLES & CO.

ASAKI

Coming Soon—MARIE LLOYD

Matinee daily, 2:30, 25c, 35c and 50c. Evening, 8:30, 25c,
50c, 75c and \$1.00. All seats reserved one week in advance.

W. B. SHERMAN
MANAGER

Empire Theatre

BERT RUSSELL
LES MANAGER

Orpheum SHOWS

THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
PHONE 2185

3 DAYS, COMMENCING MONDAY MATINEE, DECEMBER 22, 1913.
MATINEE DAILY, 2.30. NIGHTS, at 8.30.

EDDIE LEONARD
"The Minstrel"
Assisted by MABLE RUSSELL

WILLA HOLT WAKENTELD.	Coleman's European Novelty.
DR. CARL HERMAN.	JAMES MCCORMACK and ELIZABETH IRWIN.
CLAUDE and FANNIE FISHER.	NELSON and NELSON.

COMING SOON—MARIE LLOYD

Matinee daily, 2:30, 25c, 35c and 50c. Evening, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00. All seats reserved one week in advance.

W. B. SHERMAN
MANAGER

Empire Theatre

BERT RUSSELL
LES MANAGER

Orpheum SHOWS

THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE
PHONE 2185

3 Days, Commencing Monday Matinee, December, 22nd, 1913.
Matinee Daily, 2.30. Nights at 8.30.

WALTER LAWRENCE AND FRANCES CAMERON
In "A BIT OF BROADWAY"

PAUL CONKLIN.	SMITH, COOK AND MARIE BRANDON.
"THE DOUBLE CROSS."	TOLLEN SISTERS.
ORIGINAL PEREZ—J.	CUMMINGS and GLADDINGS.

COMING SOON—MARIE LLOYD

Matinee daily, 2:30, 25c, 35c and 50c. Evening, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00. All seats reserved one week in advance.

Appendix "D"

Stock Company Productions

at the Empire Theatre

1910 - 1912

Plays produced by various stock companies in Edmonton between
1910 and 1914:

A. The Empire Theatre

I. The Partello Stock Company, 1910

1. November

- i. The Travelling Salesman
- ii. Polly and the Circus
- iii. The Spoilers
- iv. The Lottery Man

2. December

- i. The Love Route
- ii. The College Girl
- iii. His Last Dollar
- iv. A Daughter of the People
- v. The Travelling Salesman
- vi. The College Widow
- vii. Carmen
- viii. Father and the Boys
- ix. Salomy Jane

1911

1. January

- i. Hello Bill
- ii. The Royal Prisoner

(The list of productions by the Partello Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1910: i. Nov. 14, ii. Nov. 21, iii. Nov. 23, iv. Nov. 28; i. Dec. 1, ii. Dec. 5, iii. Dec. 7, iv. Dec. 10, v. Dec. 14, vi. Dec. 19, vii. Dec. 20, viii. Dec. 24, ix. Dec. 30; i. Jan. 3, ii. Jan. 4.)

II. The Summers Stock Company, 1911

1. January

- i. The Wrong Mr. Wright
- ii. Managing Mildred
- iii. The New Dominion
- iv. Jane
- v. The Private Secretary
- vi. The Bells
- vii. David Harum
- viii. Seven Days
- ix. The Melting Pot
- x. The Man from Ottawa
- xi. Rip Van Winkle
- xii. The Wrong Mr. Wright

2. February

- i. The New Dominion
- ii. The Melting Pot
- iii. The Private Secretary
- iv. Facing the Music

(The list of productions by the Summers Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1911: i. Jan. 5, ii. Jan. 11, iii. Jan. 11, iv. Jan. 14, v. Jan. 16, vi. Jan. 17, vii. Jan. 19, viii. Jan. 21, ix. Jan. 24, x. Jan. 25, xi. Jan. 27, xii. Jan. 30; i. Jan. 30, ii. Jan. 30, iii. Feb. 3, iv. Feb. 3.)

III. The Courtney Morgan Stock Company, 1911

1. February

- i. A Woman of Mystery
- ii. Two Women
- iii. An Innocent Widow
- iv. The Devil
- v. The Woman Hater

2. March

- i. A Royal Outlaw
- ii. The Girl of the Golden West
- iii. A Nobel Outcast
- iv. The Colleen Bawn
- v. A Night in a Balloon
- vi. When Man Turns to Brute
- vii. The Clansman

(The list of productions of the Morgan Stock Company were obtained from the Bulletin, 1911: i. Feb. 2, ii. Feb. 13, iii. Feb. 16, iv. Feb. 20, v. Feb. 24; i. Mar. 3, ii. Mar. 6, iii. Mar. 13, iv. Mar. 17, v. Mar. 20, vi. Mar. 23, vii. Mar. 27.)

IV. The St. Clair Stock Company, 1911

1. August

- i. The Parish Priest

2. September

- i. The Silver Dagger
- ii. The Man of Mystery
- iii. Dora Thorne
- iv. Sowing the Wind
- v. Mabel Heath

(The list of productions by the St. Clair Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1911: i. Aug. 29; i. Aug. 31, ii. Sept. 5, iii. Sept. 11, iv. Sept. 15, v. Sept. 18.)

V. The Majestic Stock Company, 1911

1. October

- i. Brewster's Millions
- ii. The Middleman
- iii. The Third Degree
- iv. Girls
- v. Niobe

2. November

- i. Lena Rivers
- ii. Girls
- iii. Brewster's Millions
- iv. The Middleman

19121. January

- i. Graustark
- ii. A Bachelor's Honeymoon
- iii. Lena Rivers
- iv. The Man of the Hour
- v. My Friend from India
- vi. The Witching Hour
- vii. The Man from Ottawa

(The list of productions by the Majestic Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1911: i. Oct. 5, ii. Oct. 12, iii. Oct. 16, iv. Oct. 23, v. Oct. 26; i. Nov. 6, ii. Nov. 8, iii. Nov. 8, iv. Nov. 8; i. Jan. 2, ii. Jan. 8, iii. Jan. 11, iv. Jan. 12, v. Jan. 20, vi. Jan, 22, vii, Jan, 22.)

Appendix "E"

Stock Company Productions

at

The Edmonton Opera House, The Lyceum Theatre, and Others

1909 - 1913

A. The Edmonton Opera House.I. The Summers Stock Company, 19091. January

- i. The Lion and the Mouse
- ii. The Thief
- iii. The Fighting Hope
- iv. Caught in the Rain
- v. The Texas Steer
- vi. The Wolf
- vii. Tiger's Eye
- viii. David Harum

2. December

- i. The Great Divide
- ii. A Bachelor's Honeymoon
- iii. The Middleman
- iv. Charlie's Aunt
- v. May Blossom
- vi. The Professor's Love Story
- vii. The Witching Hour
- viii. The Lion and the Mouse
- ix. Niobe

3. January, 1910

- i. Brown's in Town
- ii. Leah Kleschna
- iii. Mrs. Dane's Defence
- iv. The Great Divide
- v. The Middleman
- vi. May Blossom

(The list of productions by the Summers Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1909: i. Jan. 2, ii. Jan. 6, iii. Jan. 6, iv. Jan. 7, v. Jan. 9, vi. Jan. 11, vii. Jan. 11, viii. Jan. 11; i. Dec. 6, ii. Dec. 6, iii. Dec. 20, iv. Dec. 21, v. Dec. 21, vi. Dec. 21, vii. Dec. 27, viii. Dec. 27, ix. Dec. 27; 1910: i. Jan. 3, ii. Jan. 3, iii. Jan. 7, iv. Jan. 10, v. Jan. 10, vi. Jan. 10.)

II. The Lorch Stock Company, 19091. April

- i. The Lieutenant and the Cowboy
- ii. Old Heidleberg
- iii. Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde
- iv. Strongheart

2. May

- i. A Gilded Fool
- ii. Carmen
- iii. A Struggle for Gold
- iv. Trilby

(The list of productions by the Lorch Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1909: i. Apr. 18, ii. Apr. 26, iii. Apr. 28, iv. Apr. 28: i. May 1, ii. May 1, iii. May 1, iv. May 1.)

III. The Jeanne Russell Stock Company, 19091. May

- i. Moths

2. June

- i. The Squaw Man
- ii. The American Girl
- iii. In Missouri
- iv. Charlie's Aunt
- v. The Parish Priest
- vi. The Power of the Cross
- vii. Jesse James
- viii. Secret Service

3. August

- i. The Little Minister
- ii. Flag of Truce

4. September

- i. Northern Lights
- ii. Sunday
- iii. When We Were Twenty-One

(The list of plays produced by the Jeanne Russell Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1909: i. May 26; i. May 29, ii. May 29, iii. June 7, iv. June 7, v. June 7, vi. June 7, vii. June 11, viii. June 7; i. Aug. 20, ii. Aug. 28; i. Sept. 1, ii. Sept. 7, iii. Sept. 7.)

IV. The May Roberts Gillard Stock Company, 19091. October

- i. Madame Satan
- ii. A Grass Widow
- iii. Mrs. Temple's Telegram

2. November

- i. Paid in Full
- ii. The Judge and the Girl

(The list of plays produced by the May Roberts Gillard Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1909: i. Oct. 15, ii. Oct. 21, iii. Oct. 26; i. Oct. 29, ii. Oct. 30.)

B. The Lyceum Theatre1. The Sherman Musical Comedy Company, 19101. August

- i. Girls at the Beach
- ii. Too Much Married

2. September

- i. My Wife's Mother
- ii. The Hindoo Doctor
- iii. The Mysterious Mrs. Baffles
- iv. A Matrimonial Mishap
- v. The Sambo Island
- vi. Three of a Kind
- vii. Our Adonis
- viii. Judge Get 'Em

3. October

- i. A Night Off
- ii. The Vassar Girls
- iii. Married Members
- iv. A Million a Minute
- v. The French Ball

19111. January

- i. The Duke of Dundas
- ii. The Grand Mogul

2. February

- i. It Happened in Nordland
- ii. Peaches
- iii. The Genie and the Jar
- iv. The Idol's Eye
- v. The Tenderfoot
- vi. Algy
- vii. Charlie's Aunt

3. March

- i. The Freak
- ii. The Isle of Zaza
- iii. Nervy Nat
- iv. Mother and the Boys
- v. The Advance Man
- vi. The Pagoda
- vii. Off to the Front
- viii. Peek In

4. April

- i. Friends
- ii. The Troubadours
- iii. The Belle of Arcadia
- iv. Thirty Days

5. July

- i. Entre Nous
- ii. Mixed and Muddled
- iii. Papa's Coachman

6. August

- i. A Day in Paris
- ii. Senator Schmidt

(The list of plays produced by the Sherman Musical Comedy Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1910: i. Aug. 26, ii. Aug. 27; i. Sept. 2, ii. Sept. 6, iii. Sept. 7, iv. Sept. 12, v. Sept. 15, vi. Sept. 20, vii. Sept. 27, viii. Sept. 29; i. Oct. 3, ii. Oct. 5, iii. Oct. 8, iv. Oct. 14, v. Oct. 17; 1911: i. Jan. 20, ii. Jan. 28; i. Feb. 2, ii. Feb. 5, iii. Feb. 11, iv. Feb. 15, v. Feb. 20, vi. Feb. 23, vii. Feb. 27; i. Mar. 3, ii. Mar. 6, iii. Mar. 9, iv. Mar. 11, v. Mar. 16, vi. Mar. 20, vii. Mar. 23, viii. Mar. 30; i. Apr. 4, ii. Apr. 7, iii. Apr. 10, iv. Apr. 19; i. July 15, ii. July 20, iii. July 28; i. Aug. 1, ii. Aug. 4.)

II. The Lewis and Lake Musical Comedy Company, 19101. October

- i. The Rollicking Girl
- ii. The \$10,000 Beauty
- iii. The Grafters

2. November

- i. The Twins' Christening
- ii. The Maid and the Mummy
- iii. Rudolph and Adolph
- iv. The Telephone Girl

19111. October

- i. The Matchmaker
- ii. The Merry Whirl
- iii. Zig-Zag Alley
- iv. Finnigan's Flats
- v. The Two Thieves
- vi. Parisian Belles
- vii. Mrs. Bluebeard, Jr.
- viii. Are you a Moose?
- ix. The Tourists

19121. May

- i. Riley's Speech
- ii. Get Rich Quick
- iii. The King of Pantigonia
- iv. Gillehooley's Troubles
- v. The Sultan of Morocco
- vi. The Matinee Girl
- vii. Gay Coney Island

2. June

- i. Hotel Topsy Turvey
- ii. At the Waldorf
- iii. The Christening of the Twins
- iv. The Derby Winner
- v. The Time, the Place and the Girl

(The list of the plays produced by the Lewis and Lake Musical Comedy Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1910: i. Oct. 20, ii. Oct. 20, iii. Oct. 31; i. Nov. 1, ii. Nov. 5, iii. Nov. 10, iv. Nov. 10; 1911: i. Sept. 26, ii. Oct. 2, iii. Oct. 2, iv. Oct. 6, v. Oct. 9, vi. Oct. 9, vii. Oct. 16, viii. Oct. 23, ix. Oct. 23; 1912: i. May 7, ii. May 11, iii. May 11,

iv. May 16, v. May 21, vi. May 12, vii. May 27; i. June 1, ii. June 4, iii. June 4, iv. June 8, v. June 17.)

III. The Hunts Comedy and Musical Company, 1910

1. November

- i. The Honeymoon Trail
- ii. The Good Ship Nancy Lee

2. December

- i. The Follies of 1910
- ii. The Aviators
- iii. The Man from Kokomo
- iv. The Minister's Son
- v. Devil Up to Date
- vi. The Explorers
- vii. The Undertakers
- viii. The Pork Packers
- ix. Cupid's Handicap

1911

3. January

- i. Hotel Topsy Turvey
- ii. The Arrival of Mr. Dooley
- iii. The Goddess of Liberty
- iv. Other People's Money

(The list of plays produced by the Hunts Comedy and Musical Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1910: i. Nov. 21, ii. Nov. 28; i. Dec. 2, ii. Dec. 5, iii. Dec. 7, iv. Dec. 12, v. Dec. 15, vi. Dec. 19, vii. Dec. 22, viii. Dec. 23, ix. Dec. 28; 1911: i. Jan. 3, ii. Jan. 7, iii. Jan. 7, iv. Jan. 7.)

IV. Cleveland's Merrymakers, 1911

1. April

- i. Thirty Days
- ii. The Galloper
- iii. The Rajah

2. May

- i. The Good Ship Nancy Lee
- ii. The Follies of 1911
- iii. To Oblige Benson
- iv. Minstrel Production
- v. Lend Me Five Shillings
- vi. A Charming Pair
- vii. Grimshaw, Bagshaw and Bradshaw
- viii. The Conservatory of Music
- ix. The Shot Gun

3. June

- i. The Devil Up-To-Date
- ii. Is Marriage a Failure?
- iii. Minstrel Production
- iv. The Pork Packers
- v. The Arrival of Mr. Dooley
- vi. Hotel Topsy Turvey
- vii. Cupid's Handicap
- viii. The Goddess of Liberty

4. July

- i. The Undertaker
- ii. The Explorers

(The list of plays produced by Cleveland's Merrymakers was obtained from the Bulletin, 1911: i. Apr. 20, ii. Apr. 24, iii. Apr. 26; i. May 1, ii. May 3, iii. May 8, iv. May 11, v. May 13, vi. May 17, vii. May 22, viii. May 25, ix. May 27; i. May 31, ii. June 5, iii. June 7, iv. June 13, v. June 14, vi. June 19, vii. June 21, viii. June 26; i. July 3, ii. July 6.)

V. Bernard's Musical Merrymakers, 19111. November

- i. At Saratoga
- ii. A Merry Bachelor
- iii. Fads and Follies
- iv. The Pawnbrokers
- v. A Hot Old Time
- vi. McCabe in Paris
- vii. Duffy's Daughter Kate
- viii. District Judge
- ix. The Wild and Woolly West

2. December

- i. An Actor's Fate
- ii. The Grafters
- iii. Slattery's Paradise
- iv. Pete the Statute
- v. The Coming Man

(The list of plays produced by Bernard's Musical Merrymakers was obtained from the Bulletin, 1911: i. Nov. 1, ii. Nov. 1, iii. Nov. 4, iv. Nov. 9, v. Nov. 9, vi. Nov. 13, vii. Nov. 18, viii. Nov. 21, ix. Nov. 27; i. Dec. 30, ii. Dec. 8, iii. Dec. 12, iv. Dec. 22, v. Dec. 23.)

VI. The Winnipeg Stock Company, 19121. July

- i. The Wolf
- ii. Is Marriage a Failure?
- iii. The Young Mrs. Winthrop
- iv. East

2. August

- i. Raffles
- ii. Charley's Aunt
- iii. Jim the Westerner
- iv. Why Smith Left Home

3. September

- i. Dora Thorne
- ii. Brown's in Town
- iii. A Gilded Fool
- iv. Cousin Kate
- v. Paid in Full

4. October

- i. A Runaway Match
- ii. The Boss of the Bar Z Ranch
- iii. Baby Mine
- iv. The Lion and the Mouse
- v. Just Out of College

5. November

- i. David Harum
- ii. The Lion and the Mouse
- iii. Seven Days
- iv. In Missouri

6. December

- i. The Lottery Man
- ii. The Man from Kokomo
- iii. Billy
- iv. Keeping Up with the Procession

19137. January

- i. Father and the Boys
- ii. The Man on the Box
- iii. A Royal Prisoner
- iv. The Travelling Salesman

- v. A Fight for a Million
- vi. The House of a Thousand Candles
- vii. The Little Minister

(The list of plays produced by the Winnipeg Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1912: i. June 25, ii. July 11, iii. July 19, iv. July 29; i. Aug. 3, ii. Aug. 10, iii. Aug. 22, iv. Aug. 24; i. Aug. 31, ii. Sept. 7, iii. Sept. 18, iv. Sept. 21, v. Sept. 27; i. Oct. 5, ii. Oct. 14, iii. Oct. 14, iv. Oct. 19, v. Oct. 26; i. Nov. 2, ii. Nov. 9, iii. Nov. 16, iv. Nov. 23; i. Nov. 30, ii. Dec. 5, iii. Dec. 7, iv. Dec. 26; 1913: i. Dec. 26, ii. Dec. 26, iii. Dec. 28, iv. Jan. 14, v. Jan. 18, vi. Jan. 25, vii, Jan. 30.)

VII. The Lyceum Stock Company, 1913

1. February

- i. The Toilers
- ii. The Spendthrift
- iii. Hazel Kirke
- iv. East Lynne
- v. Polly of the Circus
- vi. Human Hearts

2. March

- i. A Bachelor's Romance
- ii. Alias Jimmy Valentine
- iii. The Parish Priest
- iv. Anita, the Singing Girl

3. April

- i. The Blue Mouse
- ii. The Cowboy
- iii. Girls

4. May

- i. Lena Rivers
- ii. Uncle Tom's Cabin

(The list of plays produced by the Lyceum Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1913: i. Feb. 15, ii. Feb. 17, iii. Feb. 17, iv. Feb. 17, v. Feb. 17, vi. Feb. 27; i. Mar. 8, ii. Mar. 15, iii. Mar. 22, iv. Mar. 24; i. Apr. 14, ii. Apr. 19, iii. Apr. 26; i. May 3, ii. May 10.)

VIII. The Toronto Stock Company, 1913

1. May

- i. When Knighthood Was in Flower
- ii. In the Bishop's Carriage

- iii. The Girl from Texas
- iv. The Deep Purple
- v. The Squaw Man

3. July

- i. Miss Hobbs
- ii. The Romance of the Suffragette
- iii. The Old Homestead
- iv. Are You a Mason?
- v. Thelma

4. August

- i. My Friend from India
- ii. The Man from Mexico
- iii. The Spoilers
- iv. Wheels Within Wheels

5. September

- i. Sherlock Holmes
- ii. The Girl of the Golden West
- iii. Merely Mary Ann
- iv. Bought and Paid For
- v. Jane Eyre

6. October

- i. Because She Loved Him So
- ii. The Two Orphans
- iii. The Lion and the Mouse
- iv. Paid in Full

7. November

- i. The Call of the North
- ii. Caught in the Rain
- iii. The Third Degree
- iv. Forgiven

8. December

- i. Sapho
- ii. Pierre of the Plains
- iii. Peaceful Valley
- iv. Shore Acres
- v. Zaza

(The list of plays produced by the Toronto Stock Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1913: i. May 15, ii. May 24; i. Jan. 31, ii. June 6, iii. June 13, iv. June 20, v. June 28; i. July 5, ii. July 7, iii. July 12, iv. July 19, v. July 25; i. Aug. 7, ii. Aug. 13, iii. Aug. 16, iv. Aug. 25;

i. Aug. 25, ii. Sept. 5, iii. Sept. 5, iv. Sept. 20, v. Sept. 29; i. Oct. 4, ii. Oct. 14, iii. Oct. 16, iv. Oct. 29; i. Nov. 1, ii. Nov. 8, iii. Nov. 17, iv. Nov. 22; i. Nov. 29, ii. Dec. 6, iii. Dec. 12, iv. Dec. 20, v. Dec. 26.)

C. The Dominion Theatre

1. The Allen Stock Company, 1909

1. January

- i. All Due to Diana
- ii. My Friend from India
- iii. That Girl from Texas
- v. The Green Eyed Monster
- vi. Sherlock Holmes
- vii. Dad's Girl

2. February

- i. Arizona
- ii King of the Opium Ring
- iii Paid in Full
- iv. La Belle Marie
- v. Zira
- vi. The Sultan's Daughter
- vii. Zàza

(The list of plays produced by the Allen Stock Company at the Dominion Theatre was obtained from the Bulletin, 1909: i. Jan. 2, ii. Jan. 4, iii. Jan. 9, iv. Jan. 11, v. Jan. 18, vi. Jan. 25, vii. Jan. 28; i. Jan. 28, ii. Feb. 4, iii. Feb. 6, iv. Feb. 12, v. Feb. 15, vi, Feb. 19, vii. Feb. 26.)

D. The Orpheum Theatre

1. The Orpheum Players, 1909

1. September

- i. The Heart of Kentucky
- ii. The Derby Winner
- iii. The Man of Mystery
- iv. Jesse James
- v. The Octoroon

2. October

- i. A Texas Ranger
- ii. Hearts of Gold
- iii. Sherlock Holmes

(The list of plays produced by the Orpheum Players was obtained from the Bulletin: 1909: i. Sept. 2, ii. Sept. 8, iii. Sept. 17, iv. Sept. 18, v. Sept. 18; i. Sept 23, ii. Oct 16, iii. Oct. 26.)

E. Majestic Theatrei. The Della Pringle Stock Company, 19121. January

- i. Pierre of the Plains
- ii. Out of the Fold
- iii. The Parish Priest
- iv. The Spider and the Fly
- v. The Girl and the Highwayman
- vi. Breaking Into Society
- vii. The Belle of Richmond
- viii. Amu, the Circus Girl
- ix. The Devil

2. August

- i. Shore Acres
- ii. Sherlock Holmes
- iii. My Wife's Family

3. September

- i. When We Were Twenty-One
- ii. Sherlock Holmes
- iii. Mrs. Temple's Telegram
- iv. Faust
- v. A Man of Mystery

(The list of plays produced by the Della Pringle Stock Company was obtained from the Capital, 1912: i. Jan. 4, ii. Jan. 5, iii. Jan. 8, iv. Jan. 11, v. Jan. 13, vi. Jan. 18, vii. Jan. 22, viii. Jan. 25, ix. Jan. 20; i. Aug. 17, ii. Aug. 24, iii. Aug. 31; i. Sept. 7, ii. Sept. 7, iii. Sept. 17, iv. Sept. 20, v. Sept. 28.)

II. The Majestic Musical Comedy Company, 19131. May

- i. A Night Off
- ii. In the Bishop's Carriage

2. June

- i. A Trip to Coney Island
- ii. The Flower of the Ranch
- iii. A German Politician

(The list of plays produced by the Majestic Musical Comedy Company was obtained from the Bulletin, 1913: i. May 17, ii. May 24; i. June 2, ii. June 9, iii. June 14.)

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